The Poetry of Statius

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Edited by
JOHANNES J.L. SMOLENAARS
HARM-JAN VAN DAM
RUURD R. NAUTA

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PREFACE

After having organised a conference on Flavian poetry in Groningen in 2003 and edited the ensuing volume *Flavian Poetry* (Brill, 2006), we decided to devote a smaller-scale symposium to the most brilliant and versatile of the Flavian poets, P. Papinius Statius. This symposium was held at the University of Amsterdam to mark the retirement of Hans Smolenaars from the Department of Classics at the University of Amsterdam, where he had taught Latin since 1969. The essays in this volume are the revised versions of the papers delivered at this symposium.

Most aspects of the poetry of Statius, including its reception, are covered in this volume, although we regret that the *Achilleid* was somewhat underrepresented in the colloquium. Four essays are devoted to Statius' adaptation and transformation of traditional epic techniques and motifs in the *Thebaid* (Gibson, Hill, Rosati, and Sanna, who also discusses the *Achilleid*); two other contributions discuss Statius' creative imitation of tragic and other texts in the *Thebaid* (Heslin and Smolenaars); a third group of essays is devoted to the *Silvae* (Coleman, Dewar, and Nauta); and two papers are concerned with the reception of Statius' poems in European literature and scholarship (Berlincourt and van Dam). We decided, however, that, given the relatively small amount of papers, it would be more satisfactory to retain the alphabetical order of the contributors, which also leaves readers more room to construe their own links between papers.

Valéry Berlincourt writes about the pivotal role of Johann Friedrich Gronovius as an editor and commentator of the *Thebaid*. He shows that modern assumptions about the relationship between text and commentary were not shared by earlier scholars, and that philological reputations may rest on coincidences and arbitrary choices: if Caspar Barth had printed his own text instead of adopting that of Gronovius, his monumental commentary might have drawn more attention, whereas the fame of Gronovius' creditable but superficial work was enhanced by the adoption of his notes in a popular variorum edition.

Kathleen Coleman, after surveying the use of (fictional) inscriptions in Roman imaginative literature, discusses the striking scarcity

of epigraphic quotation in the *Silvae*. She connects this with Statius' strategy to transform and transcend the everyday reality of his patrons' world, and demonstrates how in various ways Statius replaces an expected reference to an inscription by his own poetry.

Harm-Jan van Dam discusses the fortunes of the *Silvae* in the Renaissance, concentrating on the reception and development of *silva(e)* as a literary genre or mode of writing. He draws attention to similarities between late 15th-century Italy and early 17th-century Holland in the great enthusiasm for the *Silvae* evidenced by philological work on the text, and by imitation and appropriation of the poems, with Angelo Poliziano and Hugo Grotius as protagonists.

Michael Dewar argues that Statius' poem on the colossal equestrian statue of Domitian in the Forum Romanum (*Silvae* 1.1) articulates two themes crucial to the propagandistic message of the statue: its association with other Flavian monuments in the vicinity and its superiority to the monuments of Julius Caesar and Augustus in the midst of which it was positioned.

Bruce Gibson examines various techniques of battle narrative in epic poetry from Homer to Silius and points at Statius' desire for compression by foreshortening episodes and limiting the pictures of individual combat, in comparison with Homer and Vergil. Gibson argues that, following Lucan and Silius, Statius adds resonances of historical modes of warfare in his similes, and uses anachronistic elements taken from historiography in his presentation of battle, in order to amplify the significance of war in his epic on a mythical heroic subject.

Peter Heslin investigates how Statius in the final books of the *Thebaid* handles Greek tragedy. He argues that, by selecting and combining themes and views from the tragedians, Statius reconciles the plot(s) of Euripides with the spirit of Sophocles. By this use of themes from tragedy, and by thematizing Athens, home of the tragedians, as a refuge for the rest of Greece, Statius turns it into a paradigm for Rome in more than one sense, and infuses the end of the *Thebaid* with moral and political overtones.

Donald Hill analyses Oedipus' prayer to Tisiphone and Jupiter's speech in the council of gods in *Thebaid* I. Oedipus' prayer to wreak vengeance on his sons is logically if not morally defensible, but Jupiter's diatribe about the failure of his previous punishments to improve mankind is, Hill argues, rather a rambling speech by an incompetent

rhetorician. The flaws in Jupiter's speech should be attributed not to Statius' possible carelessness, but rather to the weakness of Jupiter himself.

Ruurd Nauta traces Statius' self-presentation in the *Silvae* in terms of the roles the poet plays. The role of praise poet, employing the fictions of singing, lyre-playing and performance at the ceremony itself, needs to be combined with other roles more closely related to Statius' position in Roman society: that of representative subject in poems addressed to the emperor, and that of *amicus* in poems to non-imperial addressees. These roles are variously articulated in accordance with the relationship between poet and addressee and with the speech act represented by the poem.

Gianpiero Rosati identifies the theme of succession, literary and political, as informing both the opening and the close of the *Thebaid*: whereas in the prologue the poet handles the motif of Phaethon in such a way as to underscore the legitimacy of Domitian's succession of his father, in the epilogue political power is confronted by literary power, as Statius stages the succession of Vergil's *Aeneid* by his own *Thebaid*.

Lorenzo Sanna examines 'dust', 'sweat' and 'water' as generic constituents in the descriptions of ephebic heroes in Statius. The delicate charm of Parthenopaeus in the *Thebaid* and the ambiguous beauty of Achilles in the *Achilleid* are fine examples of this mixture of feminine tenderness and male strength, a typical feature of Statius' portrayal of boy-heroes. Dust and water not only enhance the beauty of the *puer delicatus*, but are also characteristics of cruel warfare. The mixture of these elements in descriptions of ephebic beauty and immature death is typical of Statius' style, but its origin can be traced back to Ovid's sensual pictures of Narcissus and Hermaphroditus.

Hans Smolenaars studies the different storylines developed since Stesichorus with regard to the timing and setting of Oedipus' self-blinding and Jocasta's suicide. Statius follows the version given by Euripides in his *Phoenissae*, as Seneca did in his play of the same name, according to which Jocasta stays alive long after Oedipus' act of blinding himself, and commits suicide only when the war breaks out. Both Latin poets construct dramatic situations different from those found in their predecessors, in a constant process of creative emulation. Statius' adaptations, moreover, demonstrate his skill at incorporating multigeneric models.

We are grateful to a number of institutions and people. The symposium was generously sponsored by the Council for the Humanities of the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW), the Dutch National Graduate School in Classical Studies (OIKOS), and the Stichting Vrienden Klassiek Seminarium van de Universiteit van Amsterdam. The Amsterdamse Universiteits-Vereniging (AUV) provided a venue commensurate with the elegance of Statius' poetry, and assisted with the organisation of the symposium. Michiel van der Keur, PhD-student at VU University Amsterdam, compiled both indexes and the bibliography, and corrected a number of errors in the manuscript; for such as may remain, the editors themselves are responsible.

Amsterdam and Groningen, July 2008

Johannes J.L. Smolenaars
Harm-Jan van Dam
Ruurd R. Nauta

ABBREVIATIONS

Greek authors and works are abbreviated according to the system of LSJ, Latin authors and works according to that of *OLD*; for Latin authors and works not included in *OLD* readily understandable abbreviations have been chosen, preferably based on those of *TLL*.

In addition, the following may be noted:

AE	*L'année épigraphique.*
ANRW	*Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, ed. H. Temporini et al., Berlin and New York 1972–
CIL	*Corpus inscriptionum Latinarum*, Berlin 1863–
CLE	F. Bücheler and E. Lommatzsch, *Carmina Latina epigraphica*, Leipzig 1895–1926.
FGrH	F. Jacoby, *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*, Berlin 1923–30, Leiden 1940–58; continued by C.W. Fornara et al., Leiden 1994–
IGUR	L. Moretti, *Inscriptiones Graecae Urbis Romae*, Rome 1968–90.
ILS	H. Dessau, *Inscriptiones Latinae selectae*, Berlin 1892–1916.
LIMC	*Lexicon iconographicum mythologiae classicae*, Zurich and Munich 1981–99.
LSJ	H.G. Liddell, R. Scott, H. Stuart Jones, R. McKenzie, P.G.W. Glare, and A.A. Thompson, *Greek-English Lexicon* [9th edn.], *with a Revised Supplement*, Oxford 1996.
OLD	*Oxford Latin Dictionary*, Oxford 1982.
PMGF	M. Davies, *Poetarum melicorum Graecorum fragmenta*, vol. 1, Oxford 1991.
TLL	*Thesaurus linguae Latinae*, Leipzig 1900–

‘*IN PONDERE NON MAGNO SATIS PONDEROSAE …*’: GRONOVIUS AND THE PRINTED TRADITION OF THE *THEBAID*[*]

Valéry Berlincourt

‘*In pondere non magno satis ponderosae …*’ It is with these words that one of his contemporaries praised the exegetical notes that Johann Friedrich Gronovius (1611–1671) included in his edition of Statius.[1] The minute in-24° volume published by the Elzeviers in Amsterdam in 1653 may indeed be termed *pondus non magnum,* and it also seems legitimate to describe as *satis ponderosae* the clever and shrewd observations of the Hamburg-born scholar. My purpose here will be to use the specific case of Gronovius’ notes on the *Thebaid* to offer some reflections on the history of scholarship: What was the weight of a scholar’s authority in the printed tradition of a Classical text, and how might its effects be felt?

Before addressing this question, it might be of use to give a very brief sketch of the exegetical material discussed below. The notes on the *Thebaid* that Gronovius published in 1653 are highly selective: they fill merely forty-one pages of this volume, and are concerned with little more than two hundred passages. Their scope is almost entirely limited to the emendation of the text of Statius.[2] Gronovius

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[*] This paper is part of a larger work in progress, dedicated to the printed commentaries and printed texts of Statius’ *Thebaid* from the fifteenth until the ninteenth century. I present here only such elements as are necessary to my main point; the content of Gronovius’ notes, as well as their elaboration and that of the text printed in his edition, will be discussed elsewhere in more detail. I am extremely grateful to Jean-Jacques Aubert, Michael Dewar, and Harm-Jan van Dam for their suggestions, and to Sjef Kemper and Hans Smolenaars for giving me access to the dissertation of Bugter 1980.

[1] On Gronovius’ philology, see Bugter 1980 and (in the perspective of the broader cultural background) Lomonaco 1990, 37–125. On Gronovius’ role in the epistolary exchanges of the *Respublica literaria,* Dibon 1978; inventory of the correspondence in Dibon, Bots and Bots-Estourgie 1974, edition of selected letters and supplements to the inventory in Dibon and Waquet 1984.

[2] *Ad* 1.53 and 4.386, not concerned with textual problems at all, are exceptions. The preeminence of emendation in Gronovius’ philological work on Tacitus is discussed at length in Bugter 1980, 85–192 (summary 195–6).

pays great attention to the manuscripts: we know that he consulted at least eleven for this edition;[3] those which have been identified range mostly from the tenth to the twelfth century, and some have been used in modern editions.[4] The place given to conjecture, though clearly subordinate, is by no means negligible. These notes often involve other aspects as well: Gronovius' broad conception of emendation leads him to tackle various questions, whenever they lend support to his views. This combination of evidence of all kinds is typical of his approach, as defined in a famous letter to Nicholas Heinsius:[5] in his eyes, the dignity of critical studies does not lie in emendation itself, but in the comprehensive knowledge of ancient languages and cultures in which emendations should always be grounded; such knowledge enables the scholar to get into the author's *genius* and thus restore the text *from inside.*[6]

1. Daum and Reinesius on Gronovius… and Barth

'*In pondere non magno satis ponderosae…*' These words have long been familiar to readers of the *Thebaid*: they were quoted, indeed, in J.A. Fabricius' *Bibliotheca latina,* first published in 1697, and from the new edition of this bibliographic handbook published in 1773–4 by J.A. Ernesti they made their way into the printed tradition of the poem through the famous *editio Bipontina* (Zweibrücken 1785). They are part of a letter that Gronovius' contemporary, Christian Daum, sent to the German doctor and *polyhistor* Thomas Reinesius (1587–1667) on February 21st, 1654—not (as described in these and other early modern sources) part of a letter sent *to* Daum *by* Reinesius [7].

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[3] *Ad* 11.191, where the language used suggests that this is the overall number of the manuscripts he consulted himself: "*Neges urnaque reponas*] In scriptis undecim reperi: *Alitibus fratrique tegas urnamque reportes.* Et invenerunt in suis alii. Quam conspirationem, qui spernere ausim? […]"

[4] Leiden, Gronov.70 = g [Anderson 2000, ms. 244], s.XI, which Gronovius *ad* 11.429 calls "mearum omnium membrana vetustissima"; London, British Library, Royal 15.C.X = r [ms. 307], s.X/XI; Oxford, Magdalen College Library, MS. Lat. 18 = O [ms. 424], s.XII.

[5] Gronovius to N. Heinsius, The Hague, *Postrid. Id. Mart. 1637* [= Burmann 1727, III 15–6, n° 12], quoted and discussed in Lomonaco 1990, 56–60.

[6] For Gronovius' characteristic insistence on considering together both form and content, see Bugter 1980, 151–5.

[7] Correct attribution in Hand (n. 45); cf. Kohlmann *Achilleis* BT 1879, VIII.

> Remitto cum largis gratiis *Gronovii Papinium.* Valde me delectarunt *Notae* tam accuratae, & in pondere non magno satis ponderosae Viri ad restituendum genuinum Auctoribus sensum peculiari qvopiam Genio nati, a Charitibusque educati. (Daum to Reinesius, Zwickau, *21. Febr. 1654* [= Bosius 1670, 151, n° 58])
>
> I am returning to you, with very many thanks, Gronovius’ *Statius.* I took very great pleasure in the notes, which are so precise and which, though they appear in something that weighs so little, are themselves quite weighty, coming as they do from a man born with some Genius all of his own for restoring to the authors their original meaning, and who was educated by the *Charites.*

The identity of the author of these lines is by no means without interest. Daum,[8] rector of the *Ratsschule* in Zwickau, was in fact one of the closest friends of Caspar von Barth (1587–1658), and he was to become the posthumous editor of many of his works—in particular of his monumental commentary on Statius, published in 1664–5 in Zwickau. Though written ten years *before* its publication, Daum’s words strikingly applied to what Barth’s commentary would *not* be (or, at any rate, would not be *considered* to be). In Gronovius’ notes, Daum found qualities of relevance and brevity (*satis ponderosae, pondere non magno*) the absence of which many readers would deplore in Barth’s *Statius,* totalling more than three thousand pages of erudite discussions often felt as digressive; such characteristics had already been criticized in Barth’s earlier works, notably in his second *Claudian,* published the same year as N. Heinsius’ commentary (1650), to which it was explicitly compared.[9] Did Daum implicitly

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8 Inventory of the correspondence addressed to him in Mahnke 2003.

9 Negative reactions to Barth’s *Claudian* include the (necessarily tendentious, given the identity of the addressee) letters to N. Heinsius by Gevartius, Antwerp, *Idibus Junii 1650* [= Burmann 1727, II 763, n° 469] (“[…] non est cur ob editionem istam vadimonium deseras. Commentarius enim ille multae lectionis est, sed exigui judicii, ut & vastum ejus Adversariorum opus.”), by Jacques Dupuy, Paris, *3 juin 1651* [= Bots 1971, 81–2, n° 30] (“Nos libraires ont enfin receu le Claudian de Barthius qui nous a épouventé de sa grosseur qui est prodigieuse; s’il se fust contenté d’y inserer les choses qui pouvoient servir à l’illustration de l’histoire du temps ie n’y trouverois rien a redire, mais c’est ce qui y est plus iejunement traitté, et il se iette sur des lieux d’autheurs barbares qui n’ont rien de commun avec Claudian; pour vous le faire court quoi que nostre bibliotheque soit fort nombreuse nous ne l’avons pas voulu accroistre de ce volume, vostre edition quoi que reduitte au petit pied comprenant beaucoup plus d’essentiel pour l’intelligence de cet auteur.”), and later by Jean Chapelain, Paris, *6 avril 1662* [= Bray 2005, 345, n° 118] (“Votre révision de Claudian vous apportera de la gloire et j’en attends avec impatience la nouvelle Edi-

contrast Gronovius' work with Barth's, and in particular with his forthcoming *Statius*? The answer largely depends on those we shall give to two other questions. 1) Was its progress then so far advanced that it might already look like a *magnum pondus* (and as *non ponderosum*)? 2) What were then Daum's, and Reinesius', personal relationship with Barth and opinion of his work?

1) How far had Barth progressed with his commentary on the Flavian poet in 1654? Much remains to be done in order to clarify the chronology, one of the main questions being in what measure his increasingly bad health allowed Barth to work during his last years.[10] However, the exegetical material posthumously published in 1664–5 is clearly the result of a very complex stratification ranging over various decades. Though some notes mention Barth's second commentary on Claudian,[11] the overall impression is that most of it was written well before 1650, and later updated only in a superficial way. This early date can be demonstrated for some notes which refer to contemporary events,[12] and its general validity is suggested *ex silentio* by the fact that, while quoting countless other scholars, Barth's *Statius* apparently never mentions Gronovius (not even his *Diatribe*, published in 1637).[13] Daum was of course perfectly aware of this progress given his close friendship with Barth. Reinesius himself cannot have been unaware of it. His published epistolary exchange with Daum gives us no precise information in this respect, nor, indeed, do those with other

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tion. Vous n'avez pas mal employé la lecture que vous avez faite du Commentaire de Barthius puisque vous y avez trouvé que vous ne vous rencontriez guère avec lui et qu'il vous laissait vos richesses tout entières."). Cf. n. 20.

[10] The elaboration of Barth's *Statius* will be discussed elsewhere. For Barth's biography, Hoffmeister 1931, 1–10. Barth's sight was badly damaged in 1637 (for the date, Clemen 1921, 274) during a siege at Leipzig, and from then on it progressively deteriorated; contemporary epistolary exchanges suggest that the condition of his health from 1650 onwards was often critical.

[11] E.g. *ad* 7.114: "*Svadeat.*] Narret, recenseat. Vide qvae de usu hujus verbi multis docemus ad Claudiani Panegyricum Manlianum, secundae Recensionis. […]"

[12] Reference is made to the wars in Germany e.g. *ad* 3.234 ("*Incendere.*] Revera bona mente *incendio* bellum comparatur, qvod per nostras has regiones jam qvintumdecimum annum experimur. Adeo talibus flammis sopiendis lenti sunt omnes latices. […]") and 11.579 ("*Soli memorent haec praelia Reges.*] […] Nostro sane misero aevo, *unius hominis Ambitione* viginti jam annis bello ardet, & pene conflagrat, Germania.").

[13] Gronovius' name does not appear in the copious indexes compiled by Daum, and I have searched for it in vain in the commentaries not only on the *Thebaid* but also on the *Silvae*.

scholars.[14] As early as 1649, however, Daum had written to Reinesius that Barth was working hard on a commentary on Statius[15] (which also lends support to the early date proposed above).

2) Do Daum’s and Reinesius’ relationship with, and opinion of, Barth make it probable that the letter of February 1654 alluded to some negative judgment on his work? As far as Daum is concerned, there can be no doubt that the relationship was harmonious and the opinion positive. On the other hand, Reinesius and Barth were on bad terms. Since the first letters, dated 1649, the published correspondence between Reinesius and Daum bears witness to Barth’s hostility towards Reinesius, who often criticized his work,[16] and it is widely concerned, as a whole, with Daum’s efforts to rehabilitate his friend. Elsewhere tensions are already evident in 1644,[17] and Reinesius is found attacking an opinion of Barth’s just one month before Daum praised Gronovius’ *Statius.*[18] We cannot therefore exclude the possibility that Daum’s letter reflected some kind of criticism expressed by Reinesius. More specifically, Reinesius himself had earlier informed Daum that a friend of his contrasted the monstrous length of Barth’s second *Claudian* with the commendable brevity of N. Heinsius’ commentary and described the latter as having been “made by the hands of the Muses and the Graces”. Now, that friend of Reinesius’ was… Gronovius.[19] The qualities that Daum praised in Gronovius

[14] I have consulted on this point Reinesius’ published correspondences with Johannes Vorstius (1647–66) [= Reinesius 1667], *ad Nesteros patrem et filium* (1626–55) [= Reinesius 1669], and with Johannes Andreas Bosius (1653–66) [= Schmidius 1700].

[15] Daum to Reinesius, Zwickau, *Id. Octobr. 1649* [= Bosius 1670, 7, n° 3]: “*Ovidianum* locum in nulla Editione vidi emendatum. […] Nisi *Janus Gebhardus* fecerit, cujus *Antiquae Lectiones* non sunt ad manum. *Papiniana* si olim incidisset, potuissem consulere *Commentarium* Mei Amici, cujus industria in hoc Poëta illustrando magna est ac prorsus singularis; qui forte, post *Claudianum,* jam sub praelo sudantem, publico dabitur: […].”

[16] Reinesius to Daum, Altenburg, *Nonis Oct. 1649* [= Bosius 1670, 2–3, n° 2]: “Non ego eo Te minus amabo, quo me magis odit amicus ille tuus [= Barth] ob liberrimam censuram, quam tamen iniquam esse alicubi nondum docuit; etsi, ut audio, minetur.”

[17] Reinesius *ad Nesteros,* Altenburg, *14. Sept. 1644* [= Reinesius 1669, 47, n° 27].

[18] Reinesius to Bosius, Altenburg, *24. Jan. 1654* [= Schmidius 1700, 129, n° 29].

[19] Reinesius to Daum, Altenburg, *Cal. Febr. 1651* [= Bosius 1670, 55–6, n° 17]: “Non celabo Te quid de *comm°.* Tui *in Claudianum* nuper e Transisulana ad me scripserit amicus: *Vidisti,* inquit; *interea immanem B. comm. in Clavdianum & promitti illic jam CLXX. Librum Adversariorum? At sustine & videbis brevi librum perpusillum, sed Musarum & Gratiarum manu factum, Clavdianum cum Notis & ex*

were thus precisely the same qualities that Reinesius' earlier letter to Daum had praised in Heinsius in explicit contrast with Barth's flaws, and in both letters they were described in similar terms (*Charites,* Graces); in Reinesius' letter the negative judgment on Barth was uttered by Gronovius, but Reinesius did not disagree.

It is not improbable, then, that Daum's letter of February 1654 alluded, if not specifically to Reinesius' letter, at least to a contrast between two competing conceptions of commentary-writing that had struck his contemporaries;[20] and we may deem that it was almost inevitably received as such by Reinesius. This does not imply that Daum intended to express his own preference for Gronovius' (and Heinsius') conception and thus criticize Barth's; rather, we may think it a gesture of courtesy that Daum praised Gronovius for qualities that Reinesius seemed to share.

If Daum's letter implicitly contrasted Gronovius' conception with Barth's, nothing prevents us from thinking that it did so with an eye to the latter's forthcoming *Statius.* In any case, the idea of setting Gronovius' *Statius* in opposition to Barth's would emerge quite naturally, at least after 1664–5, much as the idea of comparing Heinsius' and Barth's *Claudian* had done a few years earlier. Daum's words thus invite us to consider together the reception of both works.

2. Reception

During the two centuries that followed its publication, most readers of Gronovius' edition seem to have shared Daum's high opinion. The reception of its notes—which were Daum's sole concern—was exceptionally widespread. They were reproduced not only in the re-editions of Venice 1676 and 1712 (only the text was included in the first re-

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recensione Nic. Heinsii, summi Juvenis & Patri nec ingenio, nec eruditione nec versuum scribendorum facultate concessuri: illic plus ducentis locis meliorem videbis illum Poetam, de quorum cura ne per somnium quidem cogitavit Asiaticus commentator; hactenus Ille." Gronovius was then in Deventer, in the province Overijssel (*Transisulana* or *Transisalana*); his letter is apparently lost.

[20] Cf. n. 9. Gronovius himself would later compare Barth's forthcoming *Statius* to his *Claudian* in a letter to N. Heinsius, Leiden, *prid. Id. Quinctil.* <*1660*> [= Burmann 1727, III 415–6, n° 347] ("Statianus commentarius sudat etiamnum sub praelo, mole aequaturus bina volumina, quale occupat Claudianus ejus.").

edition, Lyons 1665),[21] but also in the edition *cum notis variorum* published by Johannes Veenhusen in Leiden in 1671. Largely thanks to Veenhusen, their essential substance remained alive throughout the entire printed tradition until the first half of the nineteenth century.[22] However, the extraordinary success of Gronovius' edition in the printed tradition of the *Thebaid* shows up even more clearly if we consider its *text,* which, indeed, became the undisputed foundation of almost every later edition until scholars at last began to base their work on a comprehensive study of the manuscript tradition—that is, until the second Teubner of Otto Müller in 1870.

The relationship between the fortune of the text printed in Gronovius' edition and that of the exegetical material that accompanied it also deserves mention. Its notes defended some variants that were *not* inserted into the text, while, inversely, its text contained many innovative readings that were *not* discussed in the notes. Now, throughout the printed tradition of the *Thebaid* the text and the notes followed almost entirely separate paths: both lived their own lives. In particular, most editors created their own texts without taking into account earlier exegetical material. This means, in this specific case, that almost none of them adopted those variants that were discussed in the notes but absent from the text of the 1653 edition.[23] However, given the fortune of *both* his notes and his text this was no real threat to Gronovius: his work nevertheless exercised a great influence over later editors of, and commentators on, this poem.

In contrast, we may affirm without exaggeration that Barth's edition had a limited effect upon the notes included in following editions of the *Thebaid,* and almost no effect at all upon their texts. This contrast, however, is far from coincidental: on closer analysis, the poor

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[21] These three editions reproduce the size and arrangement of Gronovius' original edition, and its engraved title-page as well (though Gronovius' name is omitted on that of Lyons 1665).

[22] For a brief survey of this exegetical tradition, see Berlincourt 2006a, 130–2 (where my claims about the almost entirely derivative character of Paris 1685 need qualification).

[23] It is telling that one of the very few exceptions (i.e. one of the very few cases where editors adopted a variant discussed in the notes but absent from the text of Gronovius' edition) concerns a passage where the text of Gronovius' edition was obviously erroneous: 3.71 *ominibusque,* present in his note, was immediately and almost universally adopted instead of the unmetrical *omnibusque* of his printed text. A few editions (all three re-editions Lyons 1665, Venice 1676 and Venice 1712, along with Mannheim 1782) even reproduced this error.

success of Barth's work is largely a consequence of the triumph of Gronovius' edition. With regard to the commentary tradition, its impact was decisively impeded by Veenhusen's edition *cum notis variorum,* which reprinted Gronovius' notes in their entirety, but offered, on the other hand, only an extremely short selection of Barth's exegetical material.[24] Now, almost all later commentators before the middle of the nineteenth century cited Barth only through this selection.[25] As a result, most of his commentary sank into oblivion for two centuries. With regard to the history of the printed text, on the other hand, his main handicap was that the text published together with his commentary in the edition of Zwickau 1664–5 did not at all reflect his own work, but was only a slightly modified reprint of Gronovius'. Since his commentary was itself given little attention in the later exegetical tradition, this meant that for later readers, and for later editors in particular, the only way to have access to by far the greater part of the original variants discussed, and even of those defended by Barth, was reading their way through the huge volumes published in 1664–5. As a matter of fact, almost no editor directly inserted some of Barth's critical material into his own text of the *Thebaid* [26]. Friedrich Dübner was right, therefore, when he lamented that most of it had been forgotten because it had been originally published with a reprint of Gronovius' text:[27]

> Insane vero egit Daumius, quod Gronovianum textum adjicere, quam Lindenbrogianum Barthianis copiis et crisi emendare maluit. Ut summa ejus temeritatis incommoda premam silentio, id certe dicendum, Daumii meritum esse, quod aliquot millia emendationum certissimarum

[24] Veenhusen's *notae variorum* preserved only about six per cent of Barth's notes, usually in a much abreviated form. By contrast, they included about one quarter of those of Bernartius, and more than three quarters of those of 'Lactantius Placidus'.

[25] A particularly clear example is that of Beraldus' commentary (Paris 1685), which used all other previous commentaries directly, but seems only to have known Barth's commentary through Veenhusen's *notae variorum.* The only exceptions are Valpy (London 1824), who drew directly from Barth a few variant readings and conjectures that he inserted into his apparatus of *variae lectiones,* as well as Weber (Frankfurt 1833) and Dübner (Paris 1835–6), who brought to light but a very small part of his material.

[26] Carey (London 1822) along with Weber and Dübner (cf. n. 25) are seemingly the only exceptions.

[27] Ironically, Dübner's own commentary suffered the same fate that he so vigorously deplored about Barth: the text printed in the edition of Paris 1835–6, where this commentary was first published, did not reflect Dübner's own critical work, but was merely reprinted instead from an earlier edition (Paris 1829–32).

> ad hunc diem in commentariis sepulta jaceant, neque in ullius editionis textu repraesententur. (Dübner in Paris 1835–6, xiv)

> But Daum acted like a madman in that he chose to join to this commentary the text of Gronovius rather than to emend Lindenbrog’s with the help of Barth’s resources and judgment. To pass in silence over the extreme inconvenience caused by his rash decision, it must certainly be said that Daum is responsible for the fact that up until our own day some thousands of absolutely indisputable emendations remain buried in the commentary and do not appear in the text of any edition.

If Dübner was clear-sighted about the negative consequences for the reception of Barth’s critical work, he was wrong in attributing the responsibility for this strategy to the posthumous editor of Barth’s commentary. Actually, as Daum’s preface makes clear—and I can see no positive reason to doubt his affirmation—, the decision was not his own, but that of Barth himself, who had first chosen to reprint Lindenbrog’s text, but then changed his mind and decided to reprint Gronovius’. The deliberate publication of this commentary with an unrelated text—be it Gronovius’ or Lindenbrog’s—may seem absurd today, just as it no doubt seemed absurd to Dübner; however, the ideal of strict correspondence between text and exegetical material that appears so natural to us is a modern one, and early editors usually did not care very much, or did not care at all, about such correspondence. On the other hand, it must be acknowledged that the relationship of the Zwickau edition of 1664–5 to that of Gronovius was particularly ambiguous, since it both reprinted its text and made no use of its notes. After all, if Veenhusen’s edition proved decisive in conferring canonical status on Gronovius’ work on the *Thebaid,* the process of canonizing Gronovius’ *text* actually began with the Zwickau edition.

3. Gronovius’ achievement

The last stage of this journey through the history of early editions leads us to ask in what measure the exceptional success of Gronovius’ edition is justified by its intrinsic quality.

The notes printed in this edition give us the opportunity to see Gronovius’ method at work. He makes good use of the numerous manuscripts he collated himself or had collated by others, by carefully

weighing their evidence.[28] He takes great account of their respective merits and, in particular, makes reference very often to the *optimi* or *meliores* as a support for the preferred reading.[29] He tries to analyze the origin of errors and to discover the true reading that lies behind them.[30] He sometimes rejects all witnesses to put forward a conjecture of his own, or one proposed by another scholar, but he does so cautiously.[31] He also exploits the indirect tradition in a thorough and balanced way.[32] He makes limited but precise use of parallel passages: his intention is to avoid giving his reader huge masses of exegetical material, a strategy that also obviously met the expectations of the Elzeviers.[33]

There is little to find fault with in Gronovius' critical method, as illustrated by his notes, though it is of course still conceived of as being mere emendation of the *textus receptus*: usually his discussions are well informed, his arguments sound, and his judgement balanced.

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[28] The situation is very different in Gronovius' *Tacitus,* which makes extremely little direct use of manuscript material: see Bugter 1980, 94–107.

[29] Gronovius follows the "best manuscript(s)" (and sometimes, as well, the most numerous) e.g. *ad* 1.112, 2.141, 2.327, 2.382, 2.484, 2.551, 2.573, 2.583, 3.71, 3.170, 3.368, 3.443, 3.583, 3.692, 3.696, 4.183, 4.227, 4.319, 4.528, 4.697, 4.843. Though he considers g (see n. 4) his best manuscript (e.g. *ad* 2.551), for him antiquity (mentioned e.g. *ad* 2.538, 3.564) is not a criterion for excellence in itself. On his conception of the interrelations of manuscripts and on his notions of paleography with special reference to Tacitus, see Bugter 1980, 107–23.

[30] E.g. *ad* 3.71, where he explains the *cunctisque* of the *textus receptus* as an unfortunate emendation of the unmetrical *omnibusque* (printed in the *text* of Amsterdam 1653, see n. 23), instead of the correct *ominibusque*; *ad* 3.564, where he notes that corruptions frequently have their origin in the failure of editors to recognize Statius' fondness for the ellipsis of *esse* in compound verbal forms.

[31] E.g. *ad* 1.10, where he conjectures *Tyriis* (accepted by Hill 1996a) but also gives arguments in favour of the rejected reading *Tyrios.* Other conjectures defended in the notes include 6.313 [numbered 310] *illi* (accepted by Hill), 6.511 *accursu* (confirmed by manuscripts, accepted by Hill). Cf. Bugter 1980, 111–23 on the prevalence of *emendatio ope codicum* over *emendatio ope ingenii* in Gronovius' work on Tacitus (in spite of very limited direct access to the manuscripts, see n. 28).

[32] The evidence of 'Lactantius Placidus' serves as a confirmation e.g. for 1.64 [numbered 65] *arcto,* 2.108 [numbered 89] *scit,* 2.551 *deire,* and 7.792 *scit*; that of Priscian, for 2.573 *confisus.* The reading of the indirect tradition is rejected e.g. *ad* 4.697 (*illis* preferred to 'Lactantius Placidus'' *illi*), 4.714 (*fluctibus* preferred to 'Lactantius Placidus'' *fructibus*), and 11.429 (*alternos* preferred to Priscian's *exter honos*). Gronovius' choice is identical with Hill's (1996a) in all cases except the last.

[33] Restrictions imposed by the book-format are mentioned e.g. *ad* 1.33 "*Nunc tendo chelyn*] […] Pluribus haec possem: sed modus opusculi non capit." and 8.515 "*Habe totas, si mens exscindere, Thebas*] […] Vbi asteriscum posuimus, vox corrupta est, de qua quid sentiamus, dicemus, ubi licebit latius exspatiari. […]"

This mixture of qualities brought good results. On the other hand, clever as they were, Gronovius’ notes remained sporadic: they greatly improved the text and interpretation of some passages, but neglected many others that were just as much in need of attention.

Assessing the quality of Gronovius’ text is no easy task. It is difficult, in particular, to avoid adopting an excessively teleological perspective. The comparison with modern editions is only partly relevant, since the latter have a totally different basis and benefit from a much better understanding of the manuscript tradition, at least in qualitative terms;[34] moreover, the readings accepted nowadays are not *always* clearly better than alternative readings. In order to judge his achievement fairly, it would be necessary to compare it with *all* the critical material that was actually known to him—which is clearly impossible. In these conditions, a mixed approach seems advisable.

Let us consider first Gronovius’ active intervention on the *textus receptus,* that is, on the text of the Amsterdam edition of 1630 that he used as the basis of his own.[35] It is often difficult or even impossible to trace back precisely the origin of the discrepancies;[36] what matters more for the present purpose, however, is their high overall number. Gronovius’ text is indeed remarkably original—at least in comparison with the other printed editions of the *Thebaid,* which are usually much closer to their respective models. But what is the value of these emendations? A general indication is given by the proportion of those which had the effect of introducing into the text, or on the contrary of suppressing from it, readings we today consider correct (though the teleological bias I mentioned above is clearly present, this information

[34] In quantitative terms, by contrast, the diversity of readings found in the manuscripts, and in particular in the *recentiores* potentially used by early editors, vastly exceeds that shown in modern apparatuses.

[35] The text of Amsterdam 1630 is nearly identical to that of Amsterdam 1624, which itself reproduces with slight alterations that of Gevartius (Leiden 1616). On Gevartius’ role in fostering the interest in Statius in the Northern Netherlands, see van Dam 1996a, 320–2; on his edition, see further Hoc 1922, 88–98.

[36] Cf. n. 1. In the 1630s Gronovius received from Grotius suggestions on the *Silvae* (see van Dam in this volume, 62–3), but also on the *Thebaid* and the *Achilleid*: see in particular *Grotius Correspondence* vol. VIII 532–6, n° 3233 (with 536 n. 1); VIII 754–5, n° 3363; VIII 779–80, n° 3377; VIII 788–9, n° 3383; VIII 808, n° 3393; IX 28–31, n° 3418; IX 95, n° 3460. Cf. Billerbeck 1997, 367–9 and *passim,* who shows that in his edition of Seneca’s tragedies Gronovius tacitly made use of N. Heinsius’ collations, notes and conjectures. On the use and appropriation of Grotius’ material by Gevartius, see van Dam 1996a, 322.

may nevertheless be deemed significant, at least as an approximation). Gronovius' text is much nearer to Hill's (1996a) than was the text of Amsterdam 1630, and the comparison with any other modern edition would lead to the same conclusion. We should therefore fully acknowledge the generally positive effect of his interventions on the printed textual tradition, which is still partly visible in modern scholarship, most notably in the texts and critical apparatuses of modern editions,[37] and also in recent commentaries. On the other hand, it should be observed that in a number of cases he dismissed what is clearly considered the correct reading today.[38] In such cases we should acknowledge that his action constituted a regression.

In order to appraise Gronovius' printed text, however, this first approach is hardly sufficient. It is equally important to take into account those passages where he chose *not* to alter the *textus receptus,* and in particular those where we know that he was, or might have been, aware of the existence of variant readings through the manuscripts he demonstrably consulted.[39] In many cases these variant readings are undeniably inferior to the readings that he retained in his text; however, sometimes they are clearly better—and a significant number of them are preferred by modern editors.[40] We thus reach a conclusion similar to that already made with reference to the notes: though Gronovius' active interventions on the text were often of great value,

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[37] Several readings conjectured by Gronovius', though accepted in our texts, are of course not attributed to him in the apparatuses since they were later confirmed by manuscripts. In contrast, modern apparatuses sometimes ascribe to Gronovius (or to other scholars) readings that are in fact present in earlier editions or in manuscripts other than those used by modern editors: see Berlincourt 2006b.

[38] Among the forty-three divergences in my sample of two hundred and seventy-one passages, more than thirty had the effect of introducing the reading adopted by Hill, fewer than ten that of suppressing it (in a few cases neither Amsterdam 1653 nor Amsterdam 1630 has Hill's reading). Amsterdam 1653 readings such as 3.533 *sunt* and 3.574 *bisseno … die* may be considered clearly inferior to Amsterdam 1630 *sint* and *bissenos … dies* (also in Hill).

[39] I consider here only those variants which were neither inserted into the text nor discussed in the notes. As we have seen above, some variants were defended in Gronovius' notes but not inserted into his text.

[40] Better readings that Gronovius failed to insert into his text include e.g. the following, found in some or all of the manuscripts listed in n. 4: 3.89 *nisu,* 3.205 *dura,* 3.240 *pugnare,* 3.367 *o ego,* 3.392 *animosaque pectora,* 3.647 *semel.* It is particularly remarkable that in most cases Gronovius maintained readings that are weakly attested, not only in the manuscripts used by Hill, but also in the sixty other manuscripts I have consulted (3.89 *nixu,* 3.205 *dira,* 3.240 *pugnate,* 3.392 *animosque et pectora,* 3.647 *simul*).

many more would have been necessary to produce a truly good text of the *Thebaid*; more significantly, he missed a considerable number of opportunities to improve the *textus receptus* with the material to which he had access.

On the whole, Gronovius’ edition appears less satisfactory than has often been claimed. This is clearly the result not of any lack of critical skill, but rather of the small amount of time he was able to dedicate to the task. He undoubtedly did important preparatory work on the *Thebaid,* notably during his ‘Grand Tour’, but also earlier.[41] However, he made very little use of it in the edition published in 1653. This is suggested, for example, by the fact that he usually does *not* discuss in his notes the better readings demonstrably attested in his sources but not inserted into his text:[42] in many cases he very probably did not consciously reject them, but simply reproduced the inferior reading of the *textus receptus* without taking pains to check whether his manuscripts contained a better variant. As a matter of fact, a letter he addressed to N. Heinsius shortly before its publication describes the preparations for this edition as having been hasty and superficial:[43]

> Ego rogatus a Ludovico Elzevirio perpaucos dies impendi P. Papinio Statio; correxi nonnulla in contextu: et reliqua in Silvis, gustumque no-

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[41] On Gronovius’ ‘Grand Tour’, Dibon and Waquet 1984, 1–36. Most of his earlier work on Statius concerns the *Silvae,* to which he dedicated his *Diatribe* published in 1637 (see e.g. the conjectures sent him by Grotius, Paris, *28 Octobris 1636* [= *Grotius Correspondence* VII 468–73, n° 2815], and van Dam in this volume 62–4), but work on the *Thebaid* (and the *Achilleid*) is attested e.g. by the correspondence with Grotius (see n. 36) and by a letter to N. Heinsius, The Hague, *Prid. Id. Mart. 1637* [= Burmann 1727, III 14, n° 11], in which Gronovius expressed his desire to be informed of others scholars’ work: “Cupio omnino ab omnibus, qui ad Statium notare aliquid volent, aut poterunt, vel potuerunt, quae comminicare [sic] mecum voluerint, accipere. Qualia enim cunque multorum erunt, servient mihi ad cogitandum. Sed praestantiss. Scriverius, non dubito, quin multa egregia jam olim observarit ad majora illa opera Poëtae mei, Thebaida dico & Achilleida. Constitutum autem mihi est, proferre & ostendere scriptorem illum, in quo semel non infeliciter rudimenta meorum ad litteras juvandas conatuum posuisse videor. At etsi minime id mihi nunc ocium: tamen suffurabor, quantum potero, subsicivarum horarum aliis studiis, ut eandem operam expendam toti Statio. Nec profecto paucorum dierum ea res, & nosti, nihil unquam nos properaturos, nec cruda, sed quantum quidem nostri ingenii (quod quam exiguum sit, agnosco sane) calore fieri potest, percocta daturos.”

[42] An exception can be found at 3.538. There he retains *horrentesque* in the text and does indeed offer a detailed note in which he discusses the better variant *haerentesque*—not to reject it, but to declare without hesitation his preference for it.

[43] Cf. *ad* 8.515 (cited in n. 33), where Gronovius raises the possibility of returning on another occasion to the point under discussion.

> tarum ad Thebaida et Achilleida addidi. […] Nihil exspectabis magni, praesertim ab homine sic districto & direpto. (Gronovius to N. Heinsius, *Daventriae, XIII. Kal. Decemb. 1652* [= Burmann 1727, III 303, n° 248])
>
> At the request of Louis Elzevier, I have dedicated a very few days to Statius; I have corrected some passages in the text: I have added my remaining material on the *Silvae*, and a taste of my notes to the *Thebaid* and the *Achilleid.* […] You will not expect anything important, the more so from a man so busy as I am, and so much torn in all directions.

Gronovius' edition was thus hardly an unsurpassable achievement. This conclusion may seem unexpected to us. To at least a few earlier readers, however, it would *not* have come as much of a surprise. In addition to the praises that were regularly heaped upon this edition (and that are often echoed by modern editors), occasional voices of dissent can also be heard. In 1880 the bibliographer Alphonse Willems called Gronovius' *Statius* a second-rate edition.[44] More explicitly relevant to the present discussion are the words of Friedrich Dübner, who, in the preface of his edition of 1835–6, criticized the shortcomings of his text:

> Is ad hanc recensionem codicibus pariter atque ingenio instructus, non omnem Statii textum judicio suo subjecit, sed iis tantum locis mederi est dignatus, qui Gronovium salvatorem requirere viderentur. Quare haec recensio, ad hodiernum diem in edd. fere servata, perfunctoriae solummodo nomen meretur. (Dübner in Paris 1835–6, xiii)
>
> Though equipped to make this recension by manuscripts and talent alike, he did not subject the whole of Statius' text to his own judgment, but deigned to bring succour only to such passages as seemed to be in search of Gronovius as their saviour. Therefore, this recension, which has been preserved until the present day in almost all editions, deserves only to be called superficial.

Dübner's criticism, as well as the more detailed discussion in the preface of Hand's 1817 edition of the *Silvae*,[45] came too late to alter the

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44 Willems 1880, n° 1166, quoting Gronovius' letter to N. Heinsius cited above.

45 Hand in Leipzig 1817, XLIV "Hic enim […], quum consilium novae recensionis per plures annos animo versasset, et subsidia critica satis multa sibi comparasset, ut ipse narrat in epistola ad Richterum p. 242. tamen talem editionem non confecit, qualem antea meditatus erat, et qualis ab hoc viro exspectari poterat, sed in ea, quae Amstelodami a. 1653 prodiit, multa vitiosa neque interpunctione expedita reliquit. In textu igitur non ubique agnosces Gronovii sedulitatem. Verum adiecit *ad Silvas Reliqua et Gustus ad Thebaidos libros,* notas, ut ait Daumius in epist. ad Reinesium 58. p. 151. in pondere non magno satis ponderosas." Gronovius' letter to Richter, De-

course of the printed tradition. Had they come earlier, they might perhaps have kept some editors from blindly following Gronovius' text.[46]

4. Conclusion

The limitations and the shortcomings of Gronovius' edition were to have a lasting negative impact on the printed tradition of the *Thebaid.* The very fact that this edition managed to impose itself for two centuries in spite of these weaknesses offers a clear illustration of the authority that renowned scholars may have exerted on the printed tradition of some Classical texts, and of its potentially counter-productive effects.

It is uncertain whether or not Gronovius' influence was felt immediately, and mainly on the grounds of his *pre-existing* reputation. In 1653, his fame had not yet reached its peak: in addition to that of Livy (Leiden 1645), considered today his masterpiece, only his editions of the two Senecas (Leiden 1649)[47] and of Gellius (Amsterdam 1651) had already been published. However, in the two decades that followed the list of his works was completed by many titles that contributed to the process of establishing him as an uncontested authority in the field of Classical scholarship.[48] It is in this new context that Veenhusen's *cum notis variorum,* published in the very year of Gronovius' death in 1671, was to prove decisive in imposing his text and notes upon the later Statian tradition. Veenhusen's edition clearly reflected his new status, and so probably did the first re-editions of his book.

Gronovius' influence is not responsible alone for the conservatism of the later printed tradition: the success of his edition was also partly due to the vacuum that surrounded it. Except for Barth, almost no commentator capable of competing with him ever dedicated his efforts to the *Thebaid.* The few scholars that did wrote other kinds of commentaries, for other kinds of readers:[49] none really attempted to con-

venter, *VI Kal. Jan. 1643,* of which I consulted a handwritten copy in Basle, contains a very brief survey of the manuscript material collected during the 'Grand Tour'.

46 Cf. n. 50 for an earlier, and much less widely known, criticism on a specific point.

47 On Gronovius' part in the rediscovery of the *codex Etruscus* first used in his edition of Seneca's tragedies, see Billerbeck 1997.

48 See Bugter 1980, 223–6.

49 The second half of the seventeenth century and the eighteenth century are the period of *cum notis variorum* editions as that of Veenhusen, but also of annotated

test his dominant position in the exegetical tradition of this poem. This is even truer of the editors: whatever the reasons, no one ever tried to offer a new text of the poem for the next two centuries. This probably had to do, at least in part, with Statius' own declining reputation. Be that as it may, in many respects Gronovius' edition imposed itself 'by default'.[50]

'*In pondere non magno satis ponderosae…*' At the end of this study, Daum's words appear in a new and rather unexpected light. Though no one will cast doubt upon their cleverness, Gronovius' notes, published in 1653 in a minute in-24° edition that was infinitely easier to handle than the heavy volumes of Barth, discussed infinitely fewer critical and exegetical issues than those of the German scholar. With all its flaws, Barth's commentary offered plenty of material that could foster the reflection of commentators and editors; given their relative thinness and their focus on emendation, Gronovius' observations were of course unable to play a similar role themselves. We know how the story ended. For the reasons given above, and probably for many others as well, Gronovius' edition had a lasting impact, whereas that including Barth's commentary was widely ignored or even forgotten. In these conditions, I would suggest a different, and deliberately polemical reading of Daum's words. It is not only its little physical weight, but also its rather modest achievement, that allows us to label Gronovius' edition a *pondus non magnum.* And if his notes, as

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translations such as those of Michel de Marolles (Paris 1658, including material by François Guyet and Jean de Peyrarède), Cornelio Bentivoglio d'Aragona (Milan 1731–2, with notes by Filippo Argelati) and William Lillington Lewis (Oxford 1767), and of the *Ad usum Delphini* of Claudius Beraldus (Paris 1685).

[50] We may compare the opposite situation of Gronovius' works on Tacitus, whose importance was underestimated by the later tradition because of different factors, notably the confusion with the inferior works of his son Jacob and his grand-son Abraham, which in some sense undermined his own authority: see Bugter 1980, 145–6. A similar confusion is found in an early criticism of Gronovius' notes on the *Thebaid,* expressed by Walter Harte, author of a translation of *Thebaid* book 6 (London 1727; on the translation, see Vessey 1996, 22; Gillespie 1999, 167–70): *ad* 6.79–81 "[…] *Gronovius* (without any authority) thinks we should read *spes avidi,* instead of *avidae,* still preserving the context, and referring *credula* to *spes.* I cannot approve of this emendation for many reasons; we at once lose half the beauty. Besides, the repetition of *in nomen* would be tautology, if it did not refer to another person: nor can *urgere vestes* be so properly applied to the father. Whoever reads this positive *Dutchman*'s preface to *Ammianus Marcellinus,* will never think him to be a man of sense, or candor." The work on Ammianus Marcellinus (Leiden 1693) was actually edited by Jacob, not Johann Friedrich, Gronovius!

well as his text, have nevertheless proved *satis ponderosae,* it is not only because of their overall value, but also, and perhaps mainly, because of the crushing weight that they exerted on the later textual and exegetical tradition until the middle of the nineteenth century.

Appendix: cited early editions and commentaries

[Leiden 1616 (Gevartius)] Publii Papinii Statii Opera omnia. Ianus Casperius Gevartius recensuit, et, Papinianarum lectionum lib. V. illustravit. Lugdun. Batavor., apud Iacob. Marcum.

[Amsterdam 1624] *Pub. Papinius Statius, Denuo ac serio emendatus,* Amsterodami, apud Guiljelmum Ianß. Caesium.

[Amsterdam 1630] *Pub. Papinius Statius, Denuo ac serio emendatus,* Amsterodami, apud Ioannem Ianssonium.

[Amsterdam 1653 (Gronovius)] *P. Papinii Statii Opera ex recensione et cum notis I. Frederici Gronovii,* Amsterodami, Typis Ludovici Elzevirii.

[Paris 1658 (Marolles-Guyet-Peyrarède)] *P. Statii Papinii Thebaidos libri duodecim cum notis Francisci Guieti Andini, Io. Peyraredi nob. Aquitani, & aliorum, opera ac studio Michaelis de Marrolles, abbatis de Villeloin,* Lutetiae Parisiorum, apud Sebastianum Huré et Fridericum Leonardi.

[Zwickau 1664 (Barth)] *Publii Papinii Statii quae exstant. Caspar Barthius recensuit, & animadversionibus locupletissimis illustravit: inspersis ad Thebaida & Achilleida commentariis ac glossis Veterum, hactenus bonam partem ineditis, & Scholiaste Lutatio multis locis corruptis castigato. Ad auctoritatem & opem manuscriptorum exemplarium, praecipue unius alteriusque admirandae bonitatis.* [posthumously ed. by C. Daum]

[Lyons 1665] *P. Papinii Statii Opera,* Lugduni, apud Vid. Iacobi Carteron.

[Leiden 1671 (Veenhusen)] *Publii Papinii Statii Sylvarum lib. V, Thebaidos lib. XII, Achilleidos lib. II, notis selectissimis in Sylvarum libros Domitii, Morelli, Bernartii, Gevartii, Crucei, Barthii, Joh. Frid. Gronovii Diatribe, in Thebaidos praeterea Placidi Lactantii, Bernartii, &c., quibus in Achilleidos accedunt Maturantii, Britannici, accuratissime illustrati a Johanne Veenhusen,* Lugd. Batav., ex Officina Hackiana.

[Venice 1676] *P. Papinii Statii Opera ex recensione, et cum notis I. Frederici Gronovii,* Venetiis, apud Paulum Balleonium.

[Paris 1685 (Beraldus)] *Publii Papinii Statii Opera interpretatione et notis illustravit Claudius Beraldus, jussu christianissimi Regis, ad usum serenissimi Delphini,* Lutetiae Parisiorum, apud Lambertum Roulland.

[Venice 1712] *P. Papinii Statii Opera ex recensione et cum notis I: Frederici Gronovii,* Venetiis, apud Nicolaum Pezzana.

[London 1727] *Poems on several occasions, by Mr. Walter Harte,* London, printed for Bernard Lintot.

[Milan 1731–2 (Bentivoglio-Argelati)] *Corpus omnium veterum poetarum Latinorum cum eorumdem Italica versione, tomus primus: continet P. P. Statii Thebaidos sex libros priores …,* Mediolani, in Regia Curia.

[Oxford 1767 (Lewis)] *The Thebaid of Statius translated into English verse, with notes and observations and a dissertation upon the whole by way of preface.* Oxford, printed at the Clarendon-press.

[Mannheim 1782] *P. Papinii Statii Opera ex recensione Io. Friderici Gronovii,* Mannhemii, cura & sumptibus Societatis literatae.

[Zweibrücken 1785] *P. Papinii Statii Opera ad optimas editiones collata,* Biponti, ex typographia Societatis.

[Leipzig 1817] *P. Papinii Statii Silvae, recensuit et cum notis Gronovii Marklandi aliorumque et suis edidit Ferdinandus Handius, vol.1,* Leipzig.

[London 1822] *P. Papinii Statii Opera, sedula recensione accurata,* Londini, sumtibus Rodwell et Martin, excudit T. Davidson.

[London 1824 (Valpy)] *P. Papinii Statii Opera omnia ex editione Bipontina cum notis et interpretatione in usum Delphini variis lectionibus notis variorum recensu editionum et codicum et indice locupletissimo accurate recensita,* Londini, curante et imprimente A. J. Valpy.

[Paris 1829–32 (Rinn-Achaintre-Boutteville)] *Œuvres complètes de Stace,* Paris, C. L. F. Panckoucke. [vol. 1 (*Silv.* 1–4) ed. by L.-W. Rinn, 2 (*Silv.* 5, *Theb.* 1–4) by N.-L. Achaintre, 3–4 (*Theb.* 5–12, *Ach.*) by M.-L. Boutteville]

[Frankfurt 1833 (Weber)] *Corpus poetarum latinorum uno volumine absolutum cum selecta varietate lectionis et explicatione brevissima edidit Guilielmus Ernestus Weber,* Francofurti ad Moenum, sumptimbus et typis Henrici Ludovici Broenneri.

[Paris 1835–6 (Dübner)] *Publii Papinii Statii Opera quae exstant cum notis aliorum et suis edidit Fr. Dubner,* Parisiis, excudit C. L. F. Panckoucke.

STONES IN THE FOREST: EPIGRAPHIC ALLUSION IN THE *SILVAE*[*]

Kathleen M. Coleman

Text was everywhere in the Roman world. While the circulation of books was restricted to the learned and wealthy élite, public writing was accessible to all, even if it was a code that the illiterate could not crack. The example of Pompeii demonstrates that the walls of an ancient city were covered with writing: accounts, shop-signs, lost-and-found notices, quotations from literary works, original compositions with literary aspirations, obscenities, gladiatorial tallies, all jostling cheek-by-jowl with the more "official" register of painted *programmata* and lapidary inscriptions. Public writing was perhaps more visible in a Roman city than at any other subsequent period until the invention of the advertising poster and the neon sign. In a material environment that was covered with writing, it should therefore be no surprise that what we think of as the "epigraphic" and "literary" registers informed one another. Many types of inscription originated as distillations of more expansive oral forms—the funerary *laudatio*, for instance, must have lent its essence to the digest of achievements in *elogia* inscribed in the Forum—and remained susceptible to influence from literary tropes and phrasing;[1] traces of the Augustan poets are prominent in the *carmina epigraphica* of the later Empire.[2] It is however, with influence in the opposite direction that I am primarily con-

[*] Earlier versions of this paper were delivered at the annual meeting of the Classical Association of Canada in May 2005 and at the triennial meeting of the Internationale Thesaurus-Kommission in Munich two months later. I am grateful for stimulating comments on both those occasions, and at the conference on Statius commemorated in this volume. To Bruce Gibson, who commented on a subsequent draft, and to Damien Nelis and Jocelyne Clément-Nelis, who alerted me to valuable bibliography, I owe special gratitude, as I do also to the editors for their acute suggestions. For passages from *Silvae* 5, I quote Bruce Gibson's translation (Gibson 2006a); the remaining translations are my own, except where otherwise indicated.

[1] For a study of similarities in thought and expression between the inscribed metrical epitaphs and poems preserved in the literary canon, see Tolman 1910.

[2] For echoes of the elegists, see Lissberger 1934; for echoes of Virgil, Hoogma 1959.

cerned: if literary texts quote and reflect other works of literature, we should expect them to quote and reflect inscribed texts as well.

The quotation of inscriptions in literary texts is not restricted to the "factual" genres of historiography, oratory, and technical writing, where they are naturally incorporated as the stuff of daily life. They are liberally "quoted" in imaginative literature as well, where their presence contributes verisimilitude, whether it is to be taken at face-value or deconstructed as a commentary on social behaviour.[3] In imaginative texts, the "quotation" of inscriptions (themselves imaginary, hence the quotation marks) clothes the fiction in recognizable dress. In occasional poetry such as the *Silvae*, which commemorate the triumphs and sorrows of daily life, it would be natural to expect inscriptions to feature prominently; but they do not, perhaps precisely because they are too quotidian for a body of work that seeks to raise the everyday to a new plane of enhanced reality. In order to highlight this remarkable *lacuna*, I shall first look briefly at some of the ways in which inscriptions are quoted in literary texts (mostly imaginative), and then consider how it is that the *Silvae* dispense with them.

1. "Quotation" of inscriptions in literary texts

A number of Latin texts are very self-conscious about the role of inscriptions. The most obvious example is Petronius' *Satyrica*, although this is difficult to pigeon-hole, since almost nothing in that fiendishly clever work can safely be taken at face-value.[4] But, at the very least, even if the inscriptions littering Trimalchio's mansion are evidently in bad taste, the fact that they are there in the first place cannot be completely implausible. In the *Cena* the cleverness of the parody depends upon Trimalchio misreading the social code in his efforts at social climbing, as is illustrated by his prospective epitaph (which has been called "the ultimate example of epigraphic self-representation"[5]) and the preceding instructions for the construction of his tomb:

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[3] On the general topic of inscriptions in literature, the study by Stein 1931 is fundamental.

[4] For comprehensive studies of the use of inscriptions by Petronius, see (for inscriptions in the entire *Satyrica*) Nelis-Clément and Nelis 2005, and (for the *Cena* alone) Tremoli 1960. Modern studies of Trimalchio's funerary inscription start from Mommsen 1878.

[5] Nelis-Clément and Nelis 2005, 14.

> ualde te rogo, ut secundum pedes statuae meae catellam pingas et coronas et unguenta et Petraitis omnes pugnas, ut mihi contingat tuo beneficio post mortem uiuere; praeterea ut sint in fronte pedes centum, in agrum pedes ducenti. omne genus enim poma uolo sint circa cineres meos, et uinearum largiter. ualde enim falsum est uiuo quidem domos cultas esse, non curari eas, ubi diutius nobis habitandum est. et ideo ante omnia adici uolo: HOC MONVMENTVM HEREDEM NON SEQVATUR ... inscriptio quoque uide diligenter si haec satis idonea tibi uidetur: C. POMPEIVS TRIMALCHIO MAECENATIANVS HIC REQVIESCIT. HVIC SEVIRATVS ABSENTI DECRETVS EST. CVM POSSET IN OMNIBVS DECVRIIS ROMAE ESSE, TAMEN NOLVIT. PIVS, FORTIS, FIDELIS EX PARVO CREVIT, SESTERTIVM RELIQVIT TRECENTIES, NEC VNQVAM PHILOSOPHVM AVDIVIT. VALE ET TV.
>
> (Petr. *Sat.* 71.6–7, 12)

> "I really want you to paint my puppy at the foot of my statue, and wreaths and perfume-flasks and all the gladiatorial contests that Petraites fought, so that thanks to you I'll be able to enjoy life after death. I also want you to see that my tomb fronts onto the road for 100 feet, and goes back a distance of 200. I want all sorts of fruit trees around my ashes, and lashings of vines. It's all wrong to have smart houses when you're alive but not to bother about the ones where we've got to live much longer. And so before anything else I want this put: 'THIS MONUMENT DOES NOT PASS TO THE HEIR.' ... As for the inscriptions, look carefully to see whether this seems okay to you: 'HERE RESTS C. POMPEIUS TRIMALCHIO MAECENATIANUS. IN HIS ABSENCE HE WAS ELECTED TO THE COLLEGE OF SIX. ALTHOUGH HE COULD HAVE BEEN ON EVERY BOARD IN ROME, HE DIDN'T WANT TO. HE WAS GOOD, BRAVE, AND RELIABLE. HE BUILT HIMSELF UP FROM NOTHING. HE LEFT 30 MILLION, AND HE NEVER LISTENED TO A PHILOSOPHER. FAREWELL TO YOU TOO.' "

Amid all the micro-management, the specification of the size of the tomb is a feature imported straight from a tombstone, the monstrous dimensions betraying the overkill typical of the *nouveaux riches*. Trimalchio knows the formula forbidding the heir to appropriate the tomb, though the syntax is a little askew.[6] And the inscription itself bristles with social *faux pas*: among other things, Trimalchio has added an *agnomen* ("Maecenatianus") to his proper nomenclature, aping the polyonomy of the aristocracy, and he uses the term associ-

[6] On the substitution of the subjunctive for the future indicative, see Tremoli 1960, 19–20.

ated with a grand imperial gesture of *recusatio* to describe his decision not to join the freedman *decuriae* in Rome (*noluit*); furthermore, the claim that he was elected *seuir in absentia* gives him away, since election *in absentia* is associated with candidacy for a much higher office than the routine appointment of *seuiri*.[7] His concluding list of virtues—itself a combination without epigraphic parallel[8]—is dominated by his bank balance, and he betrays a comical lack of culture in his claim never to have listened to a philosopher; one might have expected a conventional sentiment from the realm of popular thought, rather than its rejection. But he gets the valediction right (*uale et tu*), although the stark simplicity of the formula, without even an accompanying vocative, is perhaps inverted pretentiousness on Trimalchio's part, given that a much more inflated version—attested in epigraphically abbreviated form—would have seemed more generally consonant with his manner.[9]

Epitaphs are the most common epigraphic category, and they are proportionately the category that is most commonly "quoted" in literary texts. But it is not only Trimalchio's imagination that is preoccupied with an epigraphic form; his house displays several different sorts, starting with the *CAVE CANEM* in the entrance that is familiar from Pompeii:

> ad sinistram enim intrantibus non longe ab ostiarii cella canis ingens, catena uinctus, in pariete erat pictus superque quadrata littera scriptum: CAVE CANEM.
>
> (Petr. *Sat.* 29.1)
>
> On the left as you come in, not far from the porter's cubbyhole, there was a huge dog, all chained up, painted on the wall, and above it was written in block capitals: BEWARE OF THE DOG.

There is also, *inter alia*, the list of penalties for slaves who have gone missing (28.7), the dedicatory inscription on bronze recording a donation from Trimalchio's *dispensator* (30.1), the inscribed version of his engagement calendar (30.3). These few examples suggest the range of inscribed texts that formed the epigraphic background to daily life, each of them the product of a conscious process of selection and com-

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[7] For Trimalchio's misunderstanding of Roman élite norms, see Beard 1998, 96–8.

[8] Tremoli 1960, 22.

[9] *CIL* 6.10651 *u(iator) u(ale) it(em) tu q(ui) l(egis)*. For the simpler *uiator uale et tu*, cf. *CIL* 5.4887, 7838.

position, however routine and banal. A sense of the interest and effort that was invested in the drafting of these announcements, especially those designed to be permanent, is glimpsed in Gellius' story of the dilemma that Pompey faced in drafting the inscription for his theatre; Cicero eventually advised him to employ an abbreviation, so as to avoid having to choose between *consul tertium* or *consul tertio*:

> persuasit igitur Pompeio, ut neque "tertium" neque "tertio" scriberetur, sed ad secundum usque "t" fierent litterae, ut uerbo non perscripto res quidem demonstraretur, sed dictio tamen ambigua uerbi lateret.
> (Gell. *NA* 10.1.7)

> So he persuaded Pompey not to write either *tertium* or *tertio*, but to put the letters as far as the second *t*, so that without the word being written out in full, the sense would be clear, but the actual form of the word would be veiled in ambiguity.

Such an anecdote conveys a sense of the texture that epigraphy lends to Roman self-presentation in daily life.

It is not only prose authors who quote inscriptions. Poets also quote them, or pretend to do so. Once again, epitaphs are the most common category. Sometimes a little metrical adjustment is necessary, as with Lucan's rendering of the laconic epitaph for the mighty Pompey (8.792–3), *inscripsit sacrum semusto stipite nomen: / HIC SITVS EST MAGNVS*, adjusting to the straitjacket of the hexameter the original formulation, quoted in *De uiris illustribus* (77.9): *HIC POSITVS EST MAGNVS*. Another epitaph in Lucan, even more laconic, is envisaged on her own tomb by Cato's wife, Marcia (2.343–4): *liceat tumulo scripsisse: CATONIS / MARCIA*, an example, as a recent commentator astutely notes, of the use of the epitaph in elegy, and in poetry more generally, "to evoke the self-image or ideals of the poet-speaker".[10] The model for this use of epitaph goes back to the Augustan age. Tibullus, Propertius, and—especially—Ovid favour it.[11] These poets are, of course, all elegists, writing in the metre in which epitaphs are most comfortably at home, although the tropes and dictions of funerary epigram had already been accommodated in hexameter poetry, both bucolic and epic, by Virgil.[12] Ovid "quotes" epitaphs in the *Metamor-*

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[10] Fantham 1992, 143.

[11] Studied with great subtlety by Fedeli 1989.

[12] Cf. the lines to be inscribed on the tomb of Daphnis (*Ecl.* 5.43–4). For the adaptation of funerary epigram to commemorate minor heroes in the *Aeneid*, see Dinter 2005.

phoses too, the replication of phrasing from the epigraphic register overlaying the mythology with a veneer of Roman modernity, both witty and poignant.[13] The epitaph for Phaethon, for example, embeds the same formula that Lucan incorporated in rendering Pompey's epitaph:

> HIC SITVS EST PHAETHON CVRRVS AVRIGA PATERNI
> QVEM SI NON TENVIT MAGNIS TAMEN EXCIDIT AVSIS.
> (*Met.* 2.327–8)

> Here lies Phaethon, driver of his father's chariot. Even if he couldn't handle it, nevertheless he came to an end performing a mighty act of daring.

The formality of the epigraphic formula is deliciously at odds with the concessive clause that follows; Ovid exploits the epigraphic register as deftly as he manipulates the epic genre itself.

Out of ten embedded epitaphs in Ovid's poetry, eight come at the end of a poem or a story, or very near it;[14] the lapidary nature of an epitaph is frequently exploited to supply the "last word", especially in the *Heroides*, where the same pathos and self-positioning exemplified in Marcia's epitaph is ascribed to Ovid's tragic heroines.[15] An instance where Ovid shares a heroine's *obiter dicta* with a literary predecessor affords a rare opportunity to see him positioning himself vis-à-vis an earlier allusion to the epigraphic register; the allusion comes in Dido's final speech in the *Aeneid*, which has been noted for its "epigraphic terseness", and for displaying the characteristic funerary tropes of the completion of life's journey, the achievements of the deceased, and the role of Fortune:[16]

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13 The inclusion of epigrammatic motifs and "inscribed" epigrams in the *Metamorphoses* is analyzed as a technique of generic variation by Lausberg 1981 (1983).

14 Except for the example from the *Fasti* (*Fast.* 3.549–50), all the elegiac examples give closure (*Am.* 2.6.61–2, 2.13.25, *Her.* 2.147–8, 7.195–6, 14.129–30, *Tr.* 3.3.73–6). Two examples from the *Metamorphoses* conclude a story (*Met.* 9.794–5, 14.443–4); one does not (*Met.* 2.327–8).

15 For the epitaphs as an instrument empowering the female voices of the protagonists, see Ramsby 2005 and 2007, 113–29.

16 Pease 1935, 506, citing a comparison with the *elogia* of the Scipios by Penquitt 1910, 64. For the associations of *uixi* with the opening of sepulchral epigram, see Thomas 1998, 221 and, on Hor. *Odes* 3.26.1 *Vixi puellis nuper idoneus*, Nisbet-Rudd 2004, 309. Among many versions of the metaphor of life as a road, Virgil's formulation is repeated at *CLE* 385.4, 814: see Tolman 1910, 42. Direct epigraphic "quotation" in the *Aeneid*, with explicit reference to the act of inscription in the phrase *carmen signare*, comes at *A.* 3.286–8, where the inscription on the shield that Aeneas

uixi et quem dederat cursum Fortuna peregi,
et nunc magna mei sub terras ibit imago.
urbem praeclaram statui, mea moenia uidi,
ulta uirum poenas inimico a fratre recepi,
felix, heu nimium felix, si litora tantum
numquam Dardaniae tetigissent nostra carinae.

(Verg. *A.* 4.653–8)

I have lived my life and completed the course that Fortune assigned to me, and now my imposing shade will descend beneath the earth. I have established a famous city, I have looked upon my own walls, I have avenged my husband and exacted punishment from the brother who was my enemy—happy, alas too happy, if only the Trojan keels had never touched our shores.

Ovid's version, by contrast, eschews the grand epic theme of the founding of Carthage; his elegiac Dido is to be remembered as the victim of a tragic love. The epitaph that he invented for her was particularly useful to him, in that he employed it also in the *Fasti*,[17] although it is only the version in the *Heroides* that has the pointed contrast of two alternatives corresponding to Dido's relationships with the two men in her life:

nec consumpta rogis inscribar ELISSA SYCHAEI,
   hoc tamen in tumuli marmore carmen erit:
PRAEBVIT AENEAS ET CAVSAM MORTIS ET ENSEM:
   IPSA SVA DIDO CONCIDIT VSA MANV.

(*Her.* 7.193–6)

Consumed on the pyre I won't be inscribed as "Elissa, wife of Sychaeus". Instead, this will be the epitaph on my marble tomb: "Aeneas provided both the reason for her death and the sword; Dido fell by her own hand."

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dedicates at Actium recalls Octavian's dedication of the trophies captured from the enemy (now, remarkably, recovered by archaeological excavation: Zachos 2001): *aere cauo clipeum, magni gestamen Abantis, / postibus aduersis figo et rem carmine signo: / AENEAS HAEC DE DANAIS VICTORIBVS ARMA*. The omission of *dat/dedicat*, typical of inscriptions, is noted by Horsfall 2006, 229 (with a cross-reference to Horsfall 1999, 46, commenting upon the "manner of the Latin literary epitaph" at *A.* 7.1). On the metapoetic qualities of this epic dedication—alluding to *arma*, the name of the hero, victory, and defeat—see Barchiesi 1995, 5–6, and 1997, 17; on dedicatory epigram as an inspiration in the *Aeneid*, see Dinter 2005, 162–4.

17 Ov. *Fast.* 3.545–50 *arserat Aeneae Dido miserabilis igne, / arserat exstructis in sua fata rogis, / compositusque cinis, tumulique in marmore carmen / hoc breue, quod moriens ipsa reliquit, erat: / PRAEBVIT AENEAS ET CAVSAM MORTIS ET ENSEM: / IPSA SVA DIDO CONCIDIT VSA MANV.*

The contrast is patent, the licit relationship expressed with formulaic brevity, the illicit displaying a bold adaptation of the "cause of death" motif.

The parodic quality of these epitaphs in Ovid is predicated on psychological realism; the epitaph for Corinna's parrot, for example, reflects actual practice, in that epitaphs for pets survive from both Greek and Roman Antiquity. Hadrian's horse, Borysthenes, is a famous example (*CIL* 12.1122); more poignant, perhaps, for the anonymity of its owner, is the epitaph for the horse Speudusa ("Quickie"):

D. M.
Gaetula harena prosata,
Gaetulo equino consita,
cursando flabris compara,
aetate abacta uirgini
Speudusa Lethen incolis.

(*CIL* 6.10082 = Courtney 1995, no. 200)

To the shades of the dead. Born from the sands of Gaetulia, sired in a Gaetulian stud, equal to the winds in speed, torn away from your unsullied youth, you live in Lethe, Quickie.

The dedicatory formula, *d(is) m(anibus)*, and the summary of Speudusa's career and distinguishing characteristics, are predicated exactly upon the regular pattern of human commemoration. Likewise, in Ovid's epitaph for the parrot, the anthropomorphization of the creature is central to the success of the literary pastiche:

ossa tegit tumulus, tumulus pro corpore magnus,
quo lapis exiguus par sibi carmen habet:
COLLIGOR EX IPSO DOMINAE PLACVISSE SEPVLCRO.
ORA FVERE MIHI PLVS AVE DOCTA LOQVI.

(*Am.* 2.6.59–62)

A mound covered his bones, a mound large enough to accommodate his little body, on which a small stone displays an inscription matching its size: "MY VERY TOMB TESTIFIES THAT I WAS MY MISTRESS' PET. I WAS SKLLED AT SPEAKING BEYOND ANY OTHER BIRD."[18]

In funerary epigram the deceased frequently speaks *in propria persona*,[19] although in elegy this trope is rare.[20] There is, however, a spe-

[18] For the possibility that *PLVS AVE* simultaneously means "more than 'Hail!' ", see McKeown 1998, 144.

[19] Tolman 1910, 2–3.

cial twist to Ovid's choice of first-person narrative here: even death does not stop the loquacious bird from talking.[21]

It is important to stress that epitaphs do not have a monopoly on the inscriptions embedded in Latin verse. The *Heroides* are a useful example to set beside the *Silvae*, since, although their subject-matter is mythological, their epistolary form clothes the stories in the quotidian atmosphere of the real world. To cite examples of three non-funerary types from this work: an inscription on a statue-base is represented by the *titulus* that Phyllis imagines carving beneath a putative statue of Demophoon (*Her*. 2.73–4),[22] graffiti are represented by Oenone's name and oath carved on trees (*Her*. 5.21–2, 25–30),[23] and the genre of dedicatory inscriptions is represented by Sappho's vow to dedicate her lyre to Apollo (*Her*. 15.183–4). Nor is it only by verbatim quotation that Roman poets allude to the epigraphic register. They frequently emphasize the epigraphic nature of vows, dedications, epitaphs, and other conventionally inscribed forms without explicitly quoting them, as in the Pyrrha ode, when Horace imagines himself, a shipwreck-survivor, dedicating his sopping clothes to Neptune:[24]

> ... me tabula sacer
> uotiua paries indicat uuida
> suspendisse potenti
> uestimenta maris deo.
>
> (Hor. *Odes* 1.5.13–6)

> As for me,
> the votive tablet on the temple wall announces
> that I have dedicated my dripping wet clothes
> to the god who rules the sea.[25]

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20 Fedeli 1989, 96.

21 Noted by McKeown 1998, 144. Fedeli 1989, 96 remarks that the parrot's model, Lesbia's *passer*, which chirped non-stop to its mistress all its life, "per la via tenebrosa dell'Orco aveva avuto il buon gusto di andarsene in silenzio".

22 Cleverly subverting our expectations of an *ex voto* with a denunciation of the honorand's faithlessness: see Fedeli 1989, 84.

23 The carving of the beloved's name upon a tree is an elegiac topos that goes back to Callimachus: cf. *Aet*. fr. 73 Pf. (Acontius carving Cydippe's name), Verg. *Ecl*. 10.52–4 (Gallus carving the name of his *amores*), Prop. 1.18.21–2 (Propertius carving the name of Cynthia). The instance in *Eclogue* 10, the poem in which Virgil celebrates Gallus as the model for love-elegy, has been interpreted as an "intense metaliterary moment" reflecting on the origins of elegy: see Barchiesi 2001a, 124.

24 "[A]n iconic representation of an inscription": Thomas 1998, 221.

25 Trans. West 1995.

Sometimes epigraphic terminology is combined with an emphasis on the inscribed register, as in the instructions that Horace's character Staberius enjoined upon his heirs, to carve on his tomb the amount he was worth or else celebrate his demise with a gladiatorial display.[26] Epigraphic conventions provide a standard by which to judge those who do, or do not, observe them; the formality of the legal and epigraphic terminology underlines Staberius' perverted philosophy:

> heredes Staberi summam incidere sepulcro,
> ni sic fecissent, gladiatorum dare centum
> damnati populo paria atque epulum arbitrio Arri,
> frumenti quantum metit Africa ...
> ... quid ergo
> sensit cum summam patrimoni insculpere saxo
> heredes uoluit? ...
> ... hoc ueluti uirtute paratum
> sperauit magnae laudi fore.
> (*Sat.* 2.3.84–7, 89–91, 98–9)

> Staberius' heirs engraved on his tomb the sum total of his estate; if they hadn't done so (*ni sic fecissent*) they would have been obliged (*damnati*) to entertain the people with 100 pairs of gladiators and a public banquet at Arrius' discretion (*arbitrio*), as lavish as the corn harvest in Africa ... What did he have in mind, when he wanted his heirs to engrave the sum total of his estate on the stone? ... He hoped that this would bring him great renown, as though he had achieved it by merit.[27]

Horace draws the moral lesson: Staberius confuses riches and virtue; listing wealth is no substitute for having virtues to list instead. But Horace's commentary (*incidere sepulcro* / *insculpere saxo*) also demonstrates that epigraphic commemoration represents the ultimate ambition: immortality.

2. Epigraphic traces in the Silvae

I shall now turn to the *Silvae*, fertile thickets, one might expect, in which to hunt for epigraphic quarry, since, to change the metaphor, they hold up a magnifying mirror to the everyday details of contemporary life. As one might expect from verse that is "commissioned" for

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[26] For an announcement of the value of the estate on the tombstone compare Trimalchio's epitaph (cit. above), where, furthermore, instead of conceiving of a gladiatorial display as an alternative, one is represented on the tomb itself.

[27] On the legal terminology, see Muecke 1993, 142.

specific occasions (however one is to understand the term "commissioned"),[28] the *Silvae* are strongly rooted in the real world. But that world presents Statius with a challenge: if his patrons are to appreciate his poetry, they must recognize in it themselves and their surroundings, but they must like what they see (or, rather, hear); Statius' task is to elevate and transmogrify his addressees' mundane circumstances so that they take on supranormal dimensions and glamorous hues. Most of the people for whom he was writing were rich, and lived well; indeed, they included the person who was the richest and best-living of all, the emperor himself. So, Statius had to be alert to their pride in their possessions, and pick out what was special in their lives and invest it with those vast dimensions and glamorous hues. This results in a kind of paradox, with Statius using the most elaborate and allusive language to describe the most familiar artifacts of daily life. He makes this strategy explicit in his instructions to his "letter" (*epistula*) in *Silvae* 4.4, which, following the precedent of Catullus, Horace, and Ovid (who variously address their papyrus, book, and letter), is thoroughly anthropomorphized: *cui primum solito uulgi de more salutem, / mox inclusa modis haec reddere uerba memento*, "Give Marcellus the greetings formula in the usual way, then be sure to address him with the following words enclosed in metre" (*Silv.* 4.4.10–1). Statius' verse-letter is therefore treated as a herald rather than as a messenger of the written word: the everyday epistolary formula in prose is to be supplemented by an elevated verse epistle.

Statius performs a *tour de force* by conveying the material world in words. He can describe a floor-plan or a cityscape with elaborate precision. Features of dress and gesture, the posture of a statue large or small, a 'shopping-list' of low-grade presents—he can conjure it all up with his verbal wizardry. Yet, there are remarkably few overt allusions to writing in the *Silvae*, with the notable exception of poems written to friends who have taken an interest—or even an active role—in Statius' "serious" writing, his epic endeavours of the *Thebaid* and the *Achilleid*; or are themselves authors, such as Vibius Maximus, recipient of 4.7, who apparently composed an epitome of world-history; or at least make claims to literary connoisseurship, like Plotius Grypus, recipient of 4.9, who sent Statius for the Saturnalia a copy of some boring speeches by Brutus the tyrannicide (it seems),

[28] On the "initiative" taken by Statius' patrons, see Nauta 2002a, 28–30, 244–8.

which gives him the opportunity to evoke Catullus with some (respectfully) cheeky hendecasyllables in response.

Apart from these instances, however, the emphasis is on *viva voce* communication. Occasionally, Statius cannot resist a conceit such as his claim that, while he is composing his *epicedion* lamenting the death of Melior's pet slave Glaucias, his tears smudge the words as he writes: *lacrimis en et mea carmine in ipso / ora natant tristesque cadunt in uerba liturae*, "Look, my face is awash with tears in the midst of my poem, and sad blots fall on my words" (*Silv.* 2.1.17–8); *tristes* suggests a graceful acknowledgement of Ovid's precedent in the *Tristia,* where the pain of exile is twice said to have caused tears to smudge the text.[29] But the overall atmosphere in the *Silvae* is of an oral culture, the culture of Greek epideixis, in which extempore composition, recitation, *progymnasmata,* and other rhetorical exercises are all delivered "live" without the intervening medium of writing.[30] Naturally, the very concept of "publishing" such works in a collection that will circulate in writing is at odds with the fiction that Statius is trying to sustain. The prefaces to the individual books take pains to emphasize the rapid composition of the original poems, and even where Statius does not specifically claim extempore delivery he still tends to avoid mention of the process of writing, as in his reference to the composition of the poem about Glaucias in the preface to Book 2: *huius amissi recens uulnus, ut scis, epicedio prosecutus sum adeo festinanter ut excusandam habuerim affectibus tuis celeritatem*, "As you know, I followed up the fresh wound of his loss with a consolation poem, with such speed that I should apologize to your feelings for my rush" (*Silv.* 2 *praef.* 7–9).

I mention this relative dearth of references to writing, because it may go part of the way to explain Statius' silence about inscriptions in the *Silvae*.[31] In this work, of all works of Latin poetry, one would expect to find them. The themes of statuary acquired, public officials

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29 Ov. *Tr.* 1.1.13–4 (to his book) *neue liturarum pudeat; qui uiderit illas, / de lacrimis factas sentiat esse meis*, 3.1.15–6 *littera suffusas quod habet maculosa lituras, / laesit opus lacrimis ipse poeta suum*. Ovidian diction in this passage is noted by van Dam 1984, 84; the observation of Statius' marked use of *tristes* I owe to Bruce Gibson.

30 On this topic cf. also Nauta in this volume, 154.

31 The *Thebaid* contains one celebrated reference, occurring in the predictable context of a funeral (6.126–8): *portant inferias arsuraque fercula primi / Graiorum, titulisque pios testantur honores / gentis quisque suae*.

honored, buildings dedicated, roads constructed, deaths mourned, are indissolubly associated with epigraphic commemoration in the Roman world. And yet, Statius hardly ever mentions an inscription, let alone quotes one. This is in stark contrast with his contemporary, Martial, whose chosen genre of epigram affords him manifold opportunities to acknowledge his epigraphic debt.[32] Granted, the metre of epigram is predominantly elegiac couplets, whereas, of the 32 poems in the *Silvae*, 26 are in hexameters, four in hendecasyllables, and one each in alcaics and sapphics. Yet, far from inhibiting Statius, the lack of elegiacs should have put him on his mettle. Metrical ingenuity was one of his hallmarks, in the sense of employing metre as a vehicle of tone and meaning;[33] fitting epigraphic formulae into a metrical scheme should have been just up his street.

Statius does, however, mention the category of inscription in one very telling context: this is in the poem to Novius Vindex celebrating his new treasure, a miniature statuette of Hercules "for the table" (*Epitrapezios*), a poem that has been aptly said to "[present] itself as an elaborate substitute for an epigraphic inscription on a statue".[34] Statius remarks that Vindex can identify unattributed works of art: *quis namque oculis certauerit usquam / Vindicis artificum ueteres agnoscere ductus / et non inscriptis auctorem reddere signis?* "For who could ever compete with Vindex' eye in recognizing the traces of the old masters and restoring their maker to statues that lacked a signature?" (*Silv.* 4.6.22–4). In insisting that Vindex' connoisseurship dispenses with epigraphic assistance, Statius is supporting the impression that the *Silvae* celebrate knowledge, instinct, and taste; this is not a culture of writing, but of the senses. What makes it very likely that we are indeed to take this poem as a substitute for an epigraphic epigram is the fact that one of Martial's pair of epigrams on the same statuette explicitly mentions that Lysippus' craftsmanship is recorded on the base (Mart. 9.44.6): Λυσίππου *lego, Phidiae putaui* ("I read 'by

[32] For a study of the epigraphic nature of the epitaphs in Martial, see Henriksén 2006. Their presence in his epigrams, and contrasting absence from the *Silvae*, may perhaps be compared to the pattern observed in the Greek novels, where inscriptions are central to the plots of the "popular" novels (the *Ephesiaka* of Xenophon of Ephesus, or the *Story of Apollonius, King of Tyre*), but absent from more sophisticated works (such as Chariton's *Chaereas and Callirhoë*): see Sironen 2003.

[33] Amply demonstrated for the hendecasyllabic poems in the *Silvae* by Morgan 2000.

[34] Chinn 2005, 258.

Lysippus', I thought it was 'by Phidias' ").[35] Statius, on the other hand, completely effaces this inscription from the record of Vindex' statuette, leaving the identification of the artist as Lysippus to appear in the text as a natural property of this treasure, rather than ascribing it to a source as mundane as an inscription, and thereby reinforcing his compliment to Vindex on his ability to provide attributions for anonymous works.

The reference to Vindex aside, however, Statius in the *Silvae* scarcely mentions inscriptions. He imagines a local resident abroad saying epideictically to Crispinus, *cernis adhuc titulos* (*Silv.* 5.2.148), "you still see the inscriptions", when pointing out weapons that Crispinus' father dedicated to the god of war; but such a fleeting reference is more or less the extent of direct epigraphic allusion. In particular, it seems very odd that in eight *epicedia*—the most frequently attested type of poem in the collection, testifying to the importance of marking bereavement in a suitable manner—there is no whisper of an epitaph. The poem to Melior lamenting the death of his parrot (*Silv.* 2.4) is thick with reminiscences of Ovid's poem about Corinna's bird.[36] The 'cock-robin' motif is present in both, with all the other birds mourning the respective parrots, but, whereas Ovid's poem ends with the parrot's grave and a witty epitaph, there is no epitaph in Statius' poem; instead, it ends with a description of the lavish funeral that Melior (by implication) laid on, and an allusion to the consolatory motif of "eternal youth":

> at non inglorius umbris
> mittitur: Assyrio cineres adolentur amomo
> et tenues Arabum respirant gramine plumae
> Sicaniisque crocis, senio nec fessus inerti
> scandet odoratos phoenix felicior ignes.
>
> (*Silv.* 2.4.33–7)

[35] Printing Λυσίππου (*editio Aldina*) for the *Lysippum* of the manuscripts. The Greek form emphasizes the epigraphic register, and the paired genitives reflect the different cognitive functions of reading and thinking: Martial can read Greek, but he thinks in Latin. For the textual problem, see Henriksén 1998, 213–4 (who, however, favours *Lysippum*).

[36] The structure of both poems can be compared as follows (after van Dam 1984, 338–9): *Am.* 2.6: statement of death and exhortation of birds to mourn (1–16); praise of bird (17–42); illness, death, *obiter dicta* (43–8); *consolatio* (49–60); grave and epitaph (61–2). *Silv.* 2.4: *lamentatio* (1–15); exhortation to birds to mourn (16–23); *laudatio* (24–33); *descriptio funeris* (33–6); *consolatio* (37–8).

> But not without glory is he sent to the shades. His ashes burn with Assyrian spice and his slender feathers are fragrant with Arabian incense and Sicanian saffron, and the phoenix, wearied by sluggish old age, shall not mount his perfumed pyre more happily.[37]

On one level one might say that Statius' entire poem constitutes the bird's epitaph, although in strictly formal terms that is not true. Statius himself does refer to this poem as an "epigram", but it is important to see what he actually says:

> in arborem certe tuam, Melior, et psittacum scis a me leuis libellos quasi epigrammatis loco scriptos. eandem exigebat stili facilitatem leo mansuetus, quem in amphitheatro prostratum frigidum erat sacratissimo imperatori ni statim tradere.
>
> (*Silv.* 2 *praef.* 14–6)

> You assuredly know, Melior, that I wrote the trifling items on your tree and your parrot like epigrams, as it were. The same facility of pen was required by the Tame Lion; if I had not presented him to our most sacred Emperor as he lay prostrate in the amphitheatre, the piece would have fallen flat.

So, in calling the parrot poem an "epigram", Statius simultaneously applies the same term to the previous poem (77 lines long), which supplied an aetiological myth to account for the curious shape of a tree on Melior's estate. At the very least, however, by calling the parrot poem an "epigram", Statius is drawing attention to its form. The absence of any epitaph for it is deliberate, and would surely have struck Statius' audience as remarkable, since his entire poem is predicated on the assumption that they knew Ovid's (itself, of course, a reminiscence of Catullus' poems on Lesbia's *passer*) and could appreciate Statius' reworking of it.

In the first poem of Book 5, an *epicedion* for Abascantus' wife, Priscilla, whose tomb survives on the Via Appia, the poem reaches a climax with a description of the tomb and the statues of Priscilla displayed there in the guise of various deities:

> est locus ante Vrbem qua primum nascitur ingens
> Appia ...
> ... nil longior aetas

[37] Trans. Shackleton Bailey 2003, adapted to accommodate the interpretation of the last line by van Dam 1984, 365–7, whereby the subject of *senio … fessus inerti / scandet* is the phoenix, rather than the parrot. For the topos of "eternal youth", cf. *Silv.* 2.1.154–7 (with van Dam 1984, 144), 5.3.258–9.

carpere, nil aeui poterunt uitiare labores:
sic ca<u>tum membris, tantas uenerabile marmor
spirat opes. mox in uarias mutata nouaris
effigies ...
accipiunt uultus non indignata decoros
numina; circumstant famuli consuetaque turba
obsequiis, tunc rite tori mensaeque parantur
assiduae.

(*Silv.* 5.1.222–3, 228–32, 234–7)

There is a place outside the City where the great Appian Way begins ... Nothing will the long years wear away, nothing will the toils of time be able to harm: such care has been taken with your body, the noble marble breathes out such opulence. Next, changed into various images you are made new ... The goddesses do not disdain to put on your beautiful face; slaves and the throng assigned to memorial duties stand around, then couches and assiduous tables are duly prepared.

The consolatory motif of the ageless deceased, freed from troubles, is present;[38] but nothing even faintly resembling the form and expression of an epitaph. So, at least in this instance, one cannot explain the absence of an epitaph on the grounds that when Statius composed his *epicedion* the tomb has not yet been built, and that speed was of the essence in conveying his sentiments; even if that had been the case, there would have been nothing to prevent him from quoting an epitaph *prospectively*. In fact, immediately afterwards he goes on to say that all these signs of devotion would prompt someone to attribute the tomb to a minister of Domitian; as with Vindex' skill at attributing an unlabelled work of art, so it is the innate properties of the tomb, *in the absence of* an explicit inscription, which bespeak its identity:

... hac merito uisa pietate mariti
protinus exclames: "est hic, agnosco, minister
illius, aeternae modo qui sacraria genti
condidit inque alio posuit sua sidera caelo."

(*Silv.* 5.1.238–41)

Anyone who saw this display of a husband's devotion would straightway deservedly exclaim, "Here, I can tell, is a servant of the lord who recently founded temples for his eternal family and set his own stars amid another heaven."

Where we expect an epitaph, we get a compliment to the widower and to the regime. Hence, Statius' *epicedia* somehow compensate for the

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[38] Tolman 1910, 87–90.

absence of an epitaph; they do not themselves constitute the epitaph, but they dispense with the need for one.

A very common epigrammatic theme is the “ruined tomb”, whose epitaph is no longer legible and therefore cannot perform its commemorative function; the irony is memorably noted by Juvenal:

> ... patriam tamen obruit olim
> gloria paucorum et laudis titulique cupido
> haesuri saxis cinerum custodibus, ad quae
> discutienda ualent sterilis mala robora fici,
> quandoquidem data sunt ipsis quoque fata sepulcris.
>
> (Juv. 10.142–6)

> The nation was once overwhelmed by the ambition of a few, and their desire for fame and an epitaph that will cling to the stones that guard the ashes, which a barren fig tree is strong enough to shatter, since the tombs themselves are also subject to fate.

Martial explicitly contrasts the shattered marble with the immortality of literary text:

> marmora Messallae findit caprificus et audax
> dimidios Crispi mulio ridet equos:
> at chartis nec furta nocent et saecula prosunt,
> solaque non norunt haec monumenta mori.
>
> (Mart. 10.2.9–12)

> The fig tree splits Messalla’s marble, the bold muleteer laughs at Crispus’ halved horses. But thefts do not harm paper and the centuries do it good. These are the only memorials that cannot die.[39]

So, what commemorates Glaucias, Melior’s parrot, Priscilla, and all the other people (and the lion) that are mourned in the *Silvae* is, paradoxically, not their inscribed epitaph—which might fall into ruin and be effaced by time—but Statius’ epideictic lament, composed for the moment, to last for eternity. In a funerary context, he frequently contrasts the immortality of his poetic commemoration with the ephemeral nature of funerary rites and offerings; this contrast is given poignant expression right at the beginning of *Silvae* 5.1, where Statius promises Priscilla that his *epicedion* will build her a tomb of eternal remembrance:

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[39] Trans. Shackleton Bailey 1993. The theme of poetry outlasting a tomb is most famously expressed at Hor. *Odes* 3.30.1 *Exegi monumentum aere perennius*, although there the comparison is not with an inscription but with bronze statuary: see Nisbet-Rudd 2004, 364–9.

> sed mortalis honos, agilis quem dextra laborat:
> nos tibi, laudati iuuenis rarissima coniunx,
> longa nec obscurum finem latura perenni
> temptamus dare iusta lyra, modo dexter Apollo
> quique uenit iuncto mihi semper Apolline Caesar
> adnuat: haud alio melius condere sepulchro.
>
> (*Silv*. 5.1.10–5)

> But mortal is the commemoration fashioned by a skilled hand: I am trying with my immortal lyre to give you, most excellent wife of a distinguished husband, lasting obsequies that will not end in obscurity, provided that Apollo gives me his favourable assent, and Caesar, who always comes to me in company with Apollo. In no other tomb will you be laid to rest so well.[40]

The *consolatio* to Claudius Etruscus on the death of his father is predicated on a similar conceit: Statius conceives of his poem outlasting burnt offerings and testifying to Claudius' grief throughout the coming generations, *nos non arsura feremus / munera, uenturosque tuus durabit in annos / me monstrante dolor* ("I shall bear gifts that do not burn and your grief shall endure through years to come as I portray it", 3.3.37–9), and the *sphragis* with which the poem ends employs the metaphor of the poetic tomb, *nostra, quoque, exemplo meritus, tibi carmina sancit, / hoc etiam gaudens cinerem donasse sepulchro* ("My song too that he has earned by his example he dedicates to you, happy to have given this sepulchre also to your ashes", 3.3.215–6).[41]

Epitaphs may be the most common epigraphic form, and *epicedia* may predominate in the *Silvae*, but the living receive epigraphic commemoration too, and they are celebrated in these poems, even if—as in the case of Rutilius Gallicus—they had died in the period between the composition of the poem and its publication in the collection. In Gallicus' case, this is a particular irony, since the original poem was conceived as a thank-offering for his recovery from illness; in the preface to Book 1, Statius is frank about Gallicus' change of status from living to dead: *sequitur libellus Rutilio Gallico conualescenti dedicatus, de quo nihil dico, ne uidear defuncti testis occasione mentiri*, "There follows a piece dedicated to Rutilius Gallicus upon his

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[40] For the pedigree of the notion of a poem as a metaphorical tomb, see Gibson 2006a, 85–6 (on 5.1.15) and van Dam 1984, 485 (on 2.7.70–2). For the immortality of poetry more generally, see van Dam 1984, 328 (on 2.3.62–3).

[41] Trans. Shackleton Bailey 2003.

recovery from illness. I won't say anything about it, for fear of seeming to take advantage of the death of my witness to make something up" (*Silv.* 1 *praef.* 27–8).

Gallicus was a very prominent senator who had risen under Domitian to be *praefectus urbi*. Almost exactly halfway through his poem, which occupies a total of 131 lines, Statius employs the mouthpiece of Apollo to summarize Gallicus' career, starting with his filiation and *origo*, and then tracing his progress through the *cursus honorum*. This résumé occupies 26 lines, but a single cameo will suffice to show that Statius is elaborating upon an epigraphic model:

> hunc Galatea uigens ausa est incessere bello
> (me quoque!) per<que> nouem timuit Pamphylia messes
> Pannoniusque ferox arcuque horrenda fugaci
> Armenia et patiens Latii iam pontis Araxes.
> quid geminos fasces magnaeque iterata reuoluam
> iura Asiae? uelit illa quidem ter habere quaterque
> hunc sibi, sed reuocant fasti maiorque curulis
> nec permissa semel.
>
> (*Silv.* 1.4.76–83)

> Feisty Galatia dared to attack him in war (me too!) and through nine harvests Pamphylia was afraid of him, and so was the fierce Pannonian and Armenia, fearful for her fleeing bow, and the Araxes that now tolerates a Latin bridge. Why should I rehearse his double *fasces* and his duplicate command over mighty Asia? Indeed, she would like to have had him for a third and fourth term, but the *fasti* called him back again, and a greater curule chair, allowed to him for a second time.

Statius' allusive account of these stages of Gallicus' career appears to imply that he served in the army in Galatia, Pamphylia, Pannonia, and Armenia (77–80); was elected consul twice (*geminos fasces*, 80); appointed proconsul of Asia for two years (*magnae … iterata … iura Asiae*, 80–1); and then recalled to Rome for his second consulship (*reuocant fasti maiorque curulis*, 82).[42] Statius creates the impression of chronological progression, even though not every step in Gallicus' career may be represented. From a statue-base set up in his honour at Ephesus, for instance, we know that he was probably legionary legate

[42] For this reconstruction, see Eck 1985. Doubt as to whether Gallicus was actually proconsul in Asia, or merely legate to the proconsul, is expressed by Nauta 2002a, 208–10. Statius' epigraphic resonances, however, seem to me to depend upon the *impression* of chronological order, rather than its exactitude, and so some uncertainty in matters of detail is tolerable, not to say inevitable.

in Pannonia *twice*, both before and after he served as legate in Galatia, since he was commissioned in two legions that served there, the *XIII Gemina*, in which he held a post as military tribune, and the *XV Apollinaris*, in which he was legionary legate:

C(aio) Rutilio C(ai) f(ilio)
Stel(latina tribu) Gallico
trib(uno) mil(itum) leg(ionis) XIII
Geminae, q(uaestori), aedili curuli,
legato diui Claudi leg(ionis) XV
Apollinaris, pr(aetori), legato
prouinciae Galaticae,
sodali Augustali
consuli designato,
M(arcus) Aemilius M(arci) f(ilius) Pal(atina tribu)
Pius praef(ectus) coh(ortis) I Bosp(oranae)
et coh(ortis) I Hisp(aniensis) legato

(*ILS* 9499)

> To Gaius Rutilius Gallicus, son of Gaius, of the Stellatina tribe, military tribune of the thirteenth legion *Gemina*, quaestor, curule aedile, legate of the deified Claudius to the fifteenth legion *Apollinaris*, praetor, legate of the province of Galatia, member of the priesthood of Augustus, consul designate: Marcus Aemilius Pius, son of Marcus, of the Palatina tribe, prefect of the first cohort *Bosporana* and the first cohort *Hispaniensis*, to the legate.

In Statius' résumé of Gallicus' career, the adherence to strict epigraphic chronology—whether real or feigned—is important, because it contrasts with Statius' generally allusive and fanciful manner, which is anything but epigraphic in style; for instance, the representation of iterated offices that sometimes occur on career inscriptions is a virtuoso performance, *geminos fasces magnaeque iterata … iura Asiae*, rhetorically inflated with the suggestion that Asia would have detained Gallicus for a third or even a fourth year, if she could (81–2). Statius' "epic authority" enlarges and embellishes the bald facts, tersely conveyed by the epigraphic record; the "anachronism" of publishing the poem after Gallicus' relapse and death converts it into an epitaph of sorts, to stand alongside the inscribed testimony to his achievements.[43]

Not all the poems in the *Silvae*, however, are about people (or fauna), alive or dead; several are about buildings, including the shrine to Hercules that was erected by Statius' wealthy patron, Pollius Felix,

[43] Henderson 1998a, 104 ("epic authority"), 114.

to replace its dilapidated predecessor on his estate at Surrentum. The climax of the poem is reached when Hercules himself appears in an epiphany to Statius and praises his benefactor in a series of prayer-formulae. This technique of employing a mythological spokesperson is inherited from the Hellenistic poets by the Augustans, and thence by Statius.[44] The spot where Hercules delivers his speech is significant; he is standing *in limine*, on the threshold:

> ... nunc ipsum (*Calderini*: ipse *M*) in limine cerno
> soluentem uoces et talia dicta ferentem:
> "macte animis opibusque meos imitate labores,
> qui rigidas rupes infecundaeque pudenda
> naturae deserta domas ..."
>
> (*Silv.* 3.1.164–8)

> Now I see Himself on the threshold, giving tongue and pronouncing the following words: "Blessed in spirit and wealth, imitator of my labours, you who tame the unyielding cliffs and the deserts, barren Nature's disgrace ..."

The front of the temple is where one would expect to see an inscription, and it would normally record the identity of the person who erected the building (as with Pompey's inscription in his theatre, cit. above; the auditorium was ostensibly the approach to the shrine of Venus perched on top). In the case of Pollius' temple of Hercules, Statius takes the inscription off the pediment, so to speak, converts it from text to speech by putting it into Hercules' mouth, and expands Pollius' identity into full-blown encomium.[45]

Buildings, however, are not the only form of construction celebrated in the *Silvae*. 4.3 celebrates road-building, specifically the completion of the Via Domitiana from Sinuessa to Puteoli in AD 95. This meant that travellers between Rome and the Bay of Naples could now go along the coast virtually all the way, instead of having to make a detour inland along the Via Appia by way of Capua. As one might expect, there are some very interesting epigraphic resonances in this poem. A crucial phrase describes the culmination of Domitian's beneficent intentions in this project: *gaudens Euboicae domum Sibyl-*

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[44] On mythological spokespersons in Statius, see Coleman 1999; in Propertius, Coleman 2003.

[45] This interpretation supports the substitution of Calderini's conjecture *ipsum* for the manuscript reading *ipse* that is printed in the Oxford Classical Text by Courtney 1990.

lae / Gauranosque sinus et aestuantes / septem montibus admouere Baias, "delighting to move the Euboean Sibyl's home, the inlets of Gaurus, and steaming Baiae closer to the seven hills" (*Silv.* 4.3.24–6). An epigraphic analogue to this language has been noted in a Domitianic inscription from Puteoli that suffered *damnatio memoriae* and was subsequently re-used for carving some praetorian reliefs; the last line describes Puteoli as having been "moved closer to Rome", *urbi admota*, by the *indulgentia* of the Princeps:[46]

> Imp(eratori) Caesari / diui Vespasiani f(ilio) / Domitiano Aug(usto) / German(ico) pont(ifici) max(imo) / trib(unicia) potest(ate) XV imp(eratori) XXII / co(n)s(uli) XVII cens(ori) perpet(uo) p(atri) p(atriae) / Colonia Flauia Aug(usta) / Puteolana / indulgentia maximi / diuinique principis / urbi eius admota.
>
> (*AE* 1973, 137)

> To the emperor Caesar Domitian Augustus Germanicus, son of the deified Vespasian, *pontifex maximus*, holding the tribunician power for the fifteenth time, hailed *imperator* for the twenty-second time, consul for the seventeenth time, *censor perpetuus*, *pater patriae*, the Flavian Augustan colony of Puteoli [dedicates this], having been moved closer to his city by the indulgence of her greatest and most divine leader.

At first sight, metaphorical language in an inscription is startling, and it has been suggested that the expression *urbi admota* may have been adopted from Statius' poem or some other public context.[47] It seems more likely, however, that Statius is reflecting official propaganda;[48] while the metaphorical impact should not be exaggerated—by Statius' day the expression may have been so common as to qualify as a "dead" metaphor—it seems clear that the poem is being given a deliberately epigraphic cast, as is appropriate in the context.

If a major construction like a road is a prime candidate for epigraphic reminiscence, a monumental structure over (or beneath) it is the perfect location for such a display; just so, Statius once again turns

[46] *Indulgentia*, "by this time almost a technical term for imperial favour", is widely attested of rulers from Julius Caesar to Hadrian in official sources (imperial correspondence, inscriptions, and coin-legends) and in contemporary literature and the writings of the jurists, including several instances in the *Silvae* (1.2.174–5 *indulgentia … praesidis Ausonii*, 3.4.64 *diuum indulgentia*, 5.2.125 *magni ducis indulgentia*): see Gibson 2006a, 238.

[47] Flower 2001, 633: "one may suspect that Statius or someone else used such an image publicly and that the local population then adopted it for their inscription".

[48] Coleman 1988, 110.

inscribed text into speech, when he employs another of his divine spokesmen to compliment Domitian on bridging the R. Volturnus, previously *turbidus* and *minax*, "turbulent and threatening" (76), and making it flow in a proper channel at last:

> Vulturnus leuat ora maximoque
> pontis Caesarei reclinis arcu
> raucis talia faucibus redundat:
> "camporum bone conditor meorum,
> qui me, uallibus auiis refusum
> et ripas habitare nescientem,
> recti legibus aluei ligasti.
> et nunc ille ego turbidus minaxque,
> uix passus dubias prius carinas,
> iam pontem fero peruiusque calcor;
> ...
> sed grates ago seruitusque tanti est
> quod sub te duce, te iubente, cessi,
> quod tu MAXIMVS ARBITER meaeque
> VICTOR PERPETVVS legere ripae."
>
> (*Silv.* 4.3.69–78, 81–4)

> Volturnus raises his face and, leaning on the enormous arch of Caesar's bridge, pours out this speech from his hoarse throat: "Gracious organizer of my fields who, while I flooded my pathless valleys in ignorance of how to live within banks, bound me with the laws of a strict channel, look at me, once turbulent and threatening, scarcely tolerating hesitant craft: now I carry a bridge and am trampled by those who cross over ... But I owe you thanks and my servitude is worthwhile because under your guidance and at your command I have yielded, and your name will be read as MIGHTY CONTROLLER and EVERLASTING CONQUEROR of my bank.[49]

This speech is delivered by the rivergod Volturnus himself, leaning against an arch of the new bridge and employing prayer-formulae very similar to those employed by Hercules when he addresses Pollius Felix on the threshold of his temple. In the case of the rivergod we encounter one of Statius' rare allusions to writing and, specifically, to an inscription, when Volturnus tells Domitian how the emperor will be rendered on the bridge, as *maximus arbiter* and *uictor perpetuus* of the riverbank, although the ambiguity of the verb is masterful: he will

[49] Trans. Coleman 1988 (with the addition of upper-case to signal the epigraphic quotation).

be read like this, in fact, in Statius' poem.[50] The similarity with Frontinus' account of the Anio Novus is neat: this channel also used to be *turbidus*, and now bears an inscription recording Trajan as its *nouus auctor*:

> haec tam felix proprietas aquae omnibus dotibus aequatura Marciam, copia uero superatura, ueniet in locum deformis illius ac turbidae, NOVVM AVCTOREM IMPERATOREM CAESAREM NERVAM TRAIANVM AVGVSTVM praescribente titulo.
>
> (Fron. *Aq.* 2.93)
>
> This water has such a special character that in all its qualities it will match the Marcia, while in quantity it will actually surpass it. It will replace its predecessor, which looked nasty and was full of impurities, and an inscription will announce its "NEW FOUNDER, THE EMPEROR CAESAR NERVA TRAJAN AUGUSTUS".

On the arch of the bridge above the central pier is exactly where one would expect to find an inscription, as in a drawing that Julius Friedlaender made in 1846 of Mommsen inspecting the bridge at modern Castel di Sangro (ancient Aufidena) in Samnium (fig. 1), where the inscription that Mommsen is after is displayed in exactly that spot.[51] Where the horse is standing in the sketch is where, *mutatis mutandis*, Statius wants us to imagine the personification of the Volturnus, delivering the message inscribed above his head: Statius' spokespersons enact the epigraphic role.

To sum up: are there any stones in Statius' forest? The answer may be supplied by evoking rural New England, which is noteworthy for the degree of re-forestation that has overtaken the painful efforts by the early settlers to clear the woods away and mark out fields and pastures. The stone walls with which they demarcated and controlled the landscape are still there, somewhat crumbling but still visible among the vigorous trees and bushes that are now growing back again. In Statius' woods, the undergrowth is running riot over the stonework, but the contours of the stones are still there, and underneath the verbal luxuriance of his poetic forest we can occasionally discern an inscribed stone supporting everything that is growing over it. Statius' epideictic training, and his patrons' expectation that he

[50] Smolenaars 2006, 231 (attributing the latter interpretation, however, to Vollmer, instead of Barth, whose suggestion is refuted by him: Vollmer 1898, 457).

[51] The inscription in Friedlaender's sketch has not been identified: for the difficulties, see the caption to the frontispiece at Bodel 2001, xvi.

would render their mundane lives exotic with his verbal art, does not accommodate the nuts and bolts of that world; he replaces the functions of epigraphy with a far more oblique and sophisticated game of words, the fragile medium of textual transmission paradoxically trumping solid stone in both durability and breadth of access. The absence of inscriptions from the *Silvae* is eloquent testimony to their fundamental role in the society whose intelligentsia and glitterati Statius cultivated and entertained.

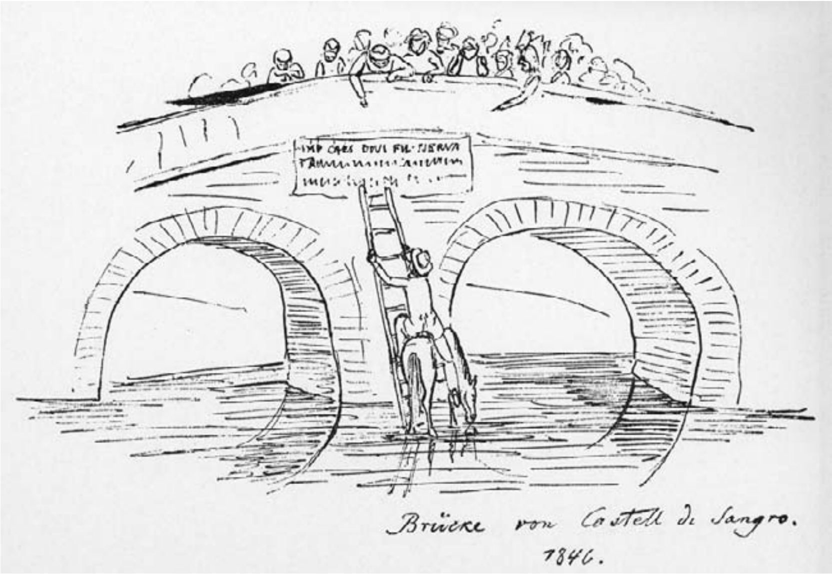

Fig. 1. Sketch by Julius Friedlaender of Mommsen inspecting an inscription on a bridge at Castel di Sangro (ancient Aufidena) in Samnium, to the astonishment of the locals. Reproduced from Wickert 1964, fig. 8, with the permission of Vittorio Klostermann Verlag.

WANDERING WOODS AGAIN: FROM POLIZIANO TO GROTIUS

Harm-Jan van Dam

Woods will keep moving. Several years ago I discussed early commentaries on the *Silvae* and some other aspects of the reception of the *Silvae* in the Netherlands around 1600.[1] The present paper is meant to be a counterpart and addition to that article, in two senses: whereas the former focused on commentaries and manuscripts, the emphasis here is more literary, on matters of genre and imitation rather than on philology—although philological issues will also be addressed. Secondly, in the latter part of this paper I shall concentrate on one Dutch scholar and poet, Hugo Grotius. My proposition is that in the seventeenth century in Leiden university circles Statius' *Silvae* gained a new importance, as a combined model for imitation and a text to be emended, which can be compared to its status in the Italian Renaissance, and that Grotius was the principal character in this respect, comparable to Poliziano.

It is well known that the leading part in the opening performance of Statius and his *Silvae* was played by Angelo Poliziano. His extensive scholarly work on Statius and the *Silvae*, his literary criticism, and his own Latin poetry had a decisive influence on the reception of Statius.[2] Besides, Poliziano is largely responsible for what, in the eyes of the sixteenth century and later, defined a *silva*, even if these definitions diverged. Standing on the shoulders of his enemy Domizio Calderini,

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[1] See van Dam 1996a.

[2] Philological work: textual notes of 1480–1 in the margin of his private copy of the *Silvae*, the exemplar Corsinianum, see the introductions to most editions and commentaries, notably Courtney's OCT and Reeve 1977; his unpublished commentary on the *Silvae* written after 1480, see Cesarini Martinelli 1978; and letters such as that to Beroaldo of April 1494 (see below). Literary criticism: his 1480 *Oratio super Fabio Quintiliano et Statii Sylvis* (Garin 1952, 870–84); his two *Miscellanea*, I published in 1489 (Katayama 1982, but this very rare book is not in any Dutch library, and apparently in few other libraries), and II (Branca & Pastore Stocchi 1972). Literary works: his poetry in general, and in particular, of course, his *Silvae*, see Galand-Hallyn 1987, Bausi 1995 and Fantazzi 2004.

author of the first printed commentary on Statius' *Silvae*,[3] Poliziano defined a *silva* as a *genus scriptionis* for which keywords are speedy composition, a certain occasion and various or arbitrary content. His chief witness was Quintilian with his famous description of what others call a *silva*.

> Diuersum est huic eorum uitium qui primo decurrere per materiam stilo quam uelocissimo uolunt, et sequentes calorem atque impetum ex tempore scribunt: hanc siluam uocant. Repetunt deinde et componunt quae effuderant: sed uerba emendantur et numeri, manet in rebus temere congestis quae fuit leuitas.
>
> (Quint. *Inst.* 10.3.17)
>
> An opposite fault is committed by people who elect to make a draft of the whole subject as rapidly as possible, and write improvisations, following the heat and impulse of the moment. They call this draft their "raw material". They then revise their effusions and give them rhythmical structure. The words and the rhythms are thus corrected, but the original triviality of the hastily accumulated material is still there.[4]

At the outset of his commentary on Statius, Poliziano explicitly stated that Quintilian's definition is relevant for the genre to which Statius' poems belong.[5] He could find some support for this view in statements by Statius himself, such as *subito calore et quadam festinandi uoluptate* ("in the heat of the moment, a sort of pleasurable haste" 1 *praef.* 3–4) and *libellorum temeritatem* ("the temerity of these little pieces" 3 *Praef* 2–3).[6] The importance attached to Statius' *Silvae* by Poliziano is evident from the fact alone that he chose them as the subject of his first course as a professor, and he connected them with Quintilian in the first place by making both the subject of his 1480 inaugural lecture.[7] I shall gladly sidestep the much-debated question what the title of Statius' collection "really" means, or what it meant to Statius' contemporaries.[8] Rather we should notice that with Poliziano *uelox*, *calor*,

[3] The first manuscript commentary is an unfinished one by Niccolo Perotti dating from 1469–70, see Galand-Hallyn 1998, 11–2, n. 7 (I owe my first knowledge of its existence to J.-L. Charlet).

[4] Translation by D.A. Russell (Loeb 1991).

[5] Cesarini Martinelli 1978, 8 line 13 – 9 line 5: "... hic scriptionis genus ... de quo ita Quintilianus ... [quotation]. Atque eius generis ii sunt Statii libelli ..." (8.24 ff.).

[6] All translations of Statius are taken from Shackleton Bailey's Loeb edition; text of the *Silvae* from Courtney's OCT.

[7] On the importance of Quintilian, or indeed of rhetorical theory, for Poliziano as a poet, see Godman 1991, 131–55.

[8] Discussed most recently in Gibson 2006a, xviii (with n. 8) – xxviii.

impetus, *festinare* and the like enter the Renaissance critical vocabulary of the *silva*(*e*). The fact that Quintilian speaks of oratorical training, not of poetry, is never taken into account—poetry and oratory coalesced long before—, and that Quintilian's own intent is negative is always ignored. Poliziano also introduced the Greek spelling *sylva*, very popular in Neolatin poetry and criticism.[9] And he actually begins his explanations by referring to slightly different meanings of *silva*: matter, Greek ὕλη; and also *indigesta materia*¸ unordered material. So around the term *silva* three clusters of notions gather, that of improvisation, heat and speed, that of raw (rhetorical) material, and that of the (arbitrary) collection, anthology, *miscellanea*.[10] Thus it is not easy to say what exactly makes up a Neolatin *silva*, or what its poetics are. Groundbreaking work has been done here by Perrine Galand, both on the French sixteenth-century *silvae* and on the poetics of these "open", "flexible", "dialogic" compositions.[11]

What Poliziano appreciated in Statius' *Silvae* was the learning (*doctrina*), and the variety in subject (*argumentorum multiplicitas*) and style (*dicendi varium artificium*). That Statius does not reach the sublime heights of Virgil and Homer is just what, according to Poliziano, makes him such a suitable example for young men learning to write Latin poetry.[12] Poliziano knew what he was talking about: when he was fourteen, he composed an elegy on the death of a beautiful young girl of the court, Albiera degli Albizzi, which won him such acclaim that it was chosen as the opening of the collection of poems on her death gathered for her afflicted fiancé. There, and in his somewhat more mature *Sylva in scabiem*, written when he was sixteen, Statius' *Silvae* were an important inspiration.[13] The earlier imitations, of Statius' *consolationes*, are more puerile than one might expect of Poliziano's genius. For instance: *nigra domus tota est* (line 9: "the

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9 Poliziano speaks of Statius' *Sylvarum liber* (Cesarini Martinelli 178.8.13) and writes *sylvam* also in the quotation from Quintilian. Fantazzi 2004, XX n. 3 points out that Poliziano generally calls Statius' poems *Sylvae*, but those of his own *Silvae*.

10 See Galand-Hallyn 1998, 610–2, and for *calor* and *furor* also 2001, 132–40. These notions, stemming from different ancient periods and genres (and frequently discussed by critics of Statius), come together in the Quattrocento.

11 See especially Galand-Hallyn 1987, 1998, 2002, 2004, also Adam 1988, though less useful for poetical matters.

12 Garin 1958, 870–2, see Godman 1993, 136–40.

13 *In Albieram Albitiam, puellam formosissimam morientem, ad Sigismundum Stupham eius sponsum*. The volume of poetry on the girl's death exists only in (luxury) manuscript, see Patetta 1917–8.

whole house is black") // *nigra domus questu* (Stat. *Silv.* 5.1.19: the house is black in complaining); *uertit in hanc toruos Rhamnusia luminis orbes* (89: "the dame of Rhamnus turned her gloomy eyes to her") // *attendit toruo tristis Rhamnusia uultu* (Stat. *Silv.* 2.6.74: "the gloomy dame of Rhamnus marked him frowning").[14] Imitation in the *Sylva in Scabiem* is more mature, such as

> Ille ego sum, o socii, quamquam ora animosque priores
> Fortuna eripuit, qui quondam heroa canendo
> Proelia et exhaustos Rhoeteo in Marte labores,
> Ibam alte spirans …
>
> (245–8)
>
> He I am, my friends, who sometime was proud of singing the praise of heroic battles and toil exhausted in Trojan warfare; but now Fortune took away my former high-flown speech.

> certe ego, magnanimum qui facta attollere regum
> ibam altum spirans Martemque aequare canendo.
> quis sterili mea corda situ, quis Apolline merso
> frigida damnatae praeduxit nubila menti?
>
> (Stat. *Silv.* 5.3.10–4)
>
> He I am for sure whose lofty inspiration would exalt the deeds of great-souled kings and match their warfare in my lay. Who has shadowed my spirit with barren neglect, who drawn chill clouds over my sentenced mind, Apollo sunk?

Here Poliziano refers to his plans for an epic on Achilles and Giuliano dei Medici which were thwarted, and in doing so he imitates not only Statius' funereal poem on his father (5.3), but also alludes to the opening of his *Achilleid* (4–5 *ire per omnem … heroa*) *and* to Domitian-Mars in Statius' first poem (1.1.18 <u>*exhaustis*</u> *Martem … armis*), thus suggesting the equation Giuliano-Mars.[15]

When Poliziano's genius had come into full bloom, his relations with Statius became more independent. He published four separate

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[14] Also 15–6 *Ac tecum, infaustus uates, consortia luctus / et repeto et querulam pectine plango lyram* with Stat. *Silv.* 2.1.26–8 *et nunc heu uittis et frontis honore soluto / infaustus uates uersa mea pectora tecum / plango lyra …*, Albiera's last words in 189 ff. draw heavily on those of Priscilla in Stat. *Silv.* 5.1.177, see Perosa 1954, 42–3.

[15] For more imitations, see Perosa 1954, 21 and *passim*, also *ad* 245–8 (but without reference to 1.1 or the *Achilleid*). Compare also 72: Stat. *Silv.* 2.4.15; 324: Stat. *Silv.* 2.1.42.

Silvae, poems declaimed as introductions, or *praelectiones*, as Poliziano calls them, to his academic courses. They represent what Poliziano calls a *Silva*, although, in fact, they are far from spontaneous improvisations, but extremely elaborate and sophisticated critical works, especially the last one, *Nutricia*, "Reward for nursing", a title which Poliziano himself compared to Statius' *Soteria* (1.4). This poem of almost 800 lines, is an enthusiastic, ambitious, sophisticated celebration of poets and poetry, including a catalogue of ancient and modern poets in the same vein as *Silvae* 5.3.[16]

As we see, Poliziano's contribution was fourfold: 1) his literary criticism of Statius, including definitions of *silva* which remained current 2) The imitation of Statius in his poetry. 3) The original compositions which were his four *Silvae*, and 4) extensive work on the text of the *Silvae*. Against this background all later work on the *Silvae* must be seen, as variations on themes Poliziano had set.

Admiration and imitation of Poliziano's own, original *Silvae* was immediate, but apparently restricted in time and place. They were studied and annotated in universities: thus Nicholas Bérauld (1473–1550) in Paris lectured on Politians' second poem, *Rusticus* in the year 1513–4,[17] and the early Dutch humanist Johan Murmellius (1480–1517), headmaster in Münster at the time, lectured on both the *Rusticus* and its predecessor *Manto* in 1509, and published commentaries on both in the next year.[18] In France poems similar to Poliziano's *Silvae* were composed in the years 1515–50.[19] The two Dutch instances known to me are much later: Hugo Grotius' early *Silva in Cuchlinum*, and his mature *Silva in Thuanum*, to which I will return.

As a result of Poliziano's designation of single poems as a *Silva*, the connection between the title *Silvae* and Statius' books of occa-

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[16] On these important poems, see the editions by Galand-Hallyn, Bausi and Fantazzi, also Godman 1993, who considers *Nutricia* as more or less the essence of all Poliziano's creative work. The first three *Silvae* were virtually the only Latin or Greek poems authorized for publication during his lifetime by Poliziano: Fantazzi 2004, xii.

[17] Galand-Hallyn 1998, 11–2, n. 7, 2002, xlvi–xlvii.

[18] Groenland 2007, 253. Murmellius planned to treat of *Rusticus* again with his pupils of 1511: *ibid.* and 451. He was an admirer of Poliziano: he recommended Poliziano's prose for a standard school curriculum, and mocked his superior for composing feeble imitations of Poliziano's poetry, all around 1510: *ibid.* 300–1, 222–3, 449.

[19] For instance by the Spanish humanist Ioannes Vaccaeus in 1522, see Galand-Hallyn 2002. The three *Silvae* by Nicolas Petit, also from 1522, consist of many elements written in different metres, see Laimé 2007.

sional, encomiastic poems became more tenuous. As a result books entitled *Silvae* from the early sixteenth century onwards may contain almost any kind of poems, religious, didactic or patriotic.[20] On the other hand, imitation of Statius' *Silvae* regularly occurs within collections or books called not *Silvae*, but *Farrago*, *Eclogae*, *Odae*; and even more in poetry named after the secondary genres most practiced by Statius *epithalamia*, *epicedia*, *genethliaca* and similar titles referring to social occasions. In the use of these titles we see the the influence of Julius Caesar Scaliger's *Poetics*, written in the late 1540's. Scaliger introduced a new element in the poetics of the *silva* by dividing it into these subgenres; or rather he reintroduced ancient concepts, for his discussion and classification of the small genres is entirely based on the rhetorical prescriptions of "Menander". In his discussion of the *Sylva*, Scaliger, after subscribing to Quintilian's view of *silva*, states that panegyric is its essence, and goes on to give rules for *epithalamia*, *genethliaca*, *soteria, propemptica, epibateria* and *apobateria*.[21] Thus, in studying late-sixteenth and seventeenth century (poetics of) *silvae* we have to take into account the different aspects implied in Poliziano's work as well as the views and classifications of Scaliger's *Poetics*, which are of a different order.

In the late fifteenth century Statius' *Silvae* were "hot" in Italy. Around 1600, the same was true for the Northern Netherlands: almost every scholar in and around the new university in Leiden (founded 1575) was busy with the text of Statius, and also with writing occasional poetry in his trail. What of poetic *Silvae* or imitation of Statius' non-epic poetry by Dutch poets and critics between 1500 and 1575? The two greatest Dutch men of Latin culture in this period were the scholar Erasmus and the poet Janus Secundus, who both died in 1536. Neither of those had much use for Statius and his *Silvae*: in Erasmus' letters he is not mentioned, and Secundus leaves him aside. In Secun-

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20 French examples of such collections have been noted by Perrine Galand-Hallyn, e.g. 1998, 613–4. See also my article to appear in Verbaal, Maes and Papy (2008) (eds.), *Latinitas perennis II.*

21 Scaliger *Poetics* 3. 95–126. For Scaliger's use of the 1508 Aldina with the two treatises ascribed there to Menander, see Deitz 1994, 40, on Menander Russell and Wilson 1981 xi–xiii and xxii ff. In discussing *sylva* Scaliger does not mention Statius, whom he discusses in 6.6 (Vogt-Spira and Deitz 2003, 282–91), see also 5.16. In 6.6 Scaliger criticizes those who prefer the *Silvae* to the epics (that is Poliziano and his like): *nugantur delectati calore illo vago, cuius impetu quasi per saltus omnia carpat oratio* (Vogt-Spira and Deitz 2003, 284; my underlining: HJvD).

dus' posthumous *poemata* of 1541 there is one book of *Silvae*; its title was probably given by the editors, his two brothers, and in this case it seems to imply "leftovers". Anyway, most of these poems are very unstatiuslike, such as two bucolic verse dialogues mostly based on Lucian, or an epithalamium in hendecasyllables which rather resembles Secundus' own famous *Basia*. His longer-lived brother Grudius (1504–70), a poet in his own right, composed a similar book of *Sylvae*.[22] At first sight it seems likely that Janus Dousa (1545–1604) played a part in brokering Statius or *Silvae* in whatever sense. This nobleman was the key-figure in the founding of Leiden University, and in everything concerning its first thirty years. He was also a prolific and original poet, whose influence on Dutch Neolatin poetry can hardly be overestimated, who had lived in Paris for some years in the early sixties of the century, in a circle of scholars and poets. However, in his poetry there is hardly a trace of Statius, whom of course he knew as he knew all of Latin poetry, and especially Martial. But he preferred archaic and classical literature; in his philological work he busied himself with Plautus, Lucilius and Catullus. He composed two books of *Sylvae* (1569), but their content does not at all remind of Statius. The first book does exploit the theme of variety, with its 14 poems in different metres addressed to friends, but improvisation or occasion play no part in it. The second book contains the *Adoptiva*. In fact, in working through the old but indispensable book on Dutch Neolatin poetry by Hofman Peerlkamp, one finds hardly anything between 1500 and 1600 that could point to a poetical interest in Statius (or Poliziano).[23] And this seems to apply to scholarly work as well—although I cannot pretend to have studied that in any depth. The only references and quotations of Statius' (or Poliziano's) *Silvae* by early Dutch humanists occur in the circle of Murmellius around 1510, but these early examples remain isolated. So here my result is negative: neither Italy nor Paris exported the *Silvae* to the North in this period.

As a matter of fact, the *Silvae* seem to shoot up almost overnight in the Netherlands towards 1600, in the 1595 edition of Statius' works by Johan Bernaert (1568–1601), a text with some notes (thirteen pages

22 In Vulcanius 1612. It contains Theocritean eclogues (*Narcissus* and *Myrtilus*), a Lucianic dialogue and two other poems.

23 Hofman Peerlkamp 1838, see also van Dam 1996a, 316–7 with note 8 and van Dam forthcoming (n. 20). The selection in Adam 1988, 327 ff. seems rather arbitrary.

for the *Silvae*), published in Antwerp, and his real achievement, the 1599 commentary on the *Silvae*, the first since Domizio Calderini's.[24] I have written about Bernaert and his commentary and about the explosion of interest in Statius and the *Silvae* elsewhere; so here I will confine myself to a few remarks and additions.[25] Bernaert, a melancholy young lawyer, had apparently hit upon the idea of publishing a Statius by himself, and succeeded, especially by a judicious choice of influential patrons, in the first place Iustus Lipsius (1547–1606), who imitated and praised Statius' *Silvae* repeatedly. Besides Lipsius, who had left the Protestant University of the North for Roman Catholic Louvain, Bernaert's patrons and dedicatees are a bishop and an archbishop, and he was an ardent catholic.

It seems as if Bernaert gave the sign for a new philological interest in Statius and, following that, new poetical interest in the *Silvae*, all connected to the new Protestant university of Leiden in the North. Scholars were feverishly preparing editions and annotating their margins. In 1600 a new edition of the whole Statius was published in Paris, that of the Hamburg lawyer Friedrich Lindenbruch (1573–1648), the first to give the scholia by Lactantius Placidus on the *Achilleid*. His home-base was Leiden at the time, where he studied under Joseph Scaliger, who wrote to him in Paris, praising his plans of publishing Lactantius, sharing conjectures, and taking him to task at other times.[26] Another pupil of Scaliger seems to have worked on Statius in the same year 1600, Johannes Wower (1574/5–1612). In a letter of 30 March Scaliger thanks him for sending some *folia Lactantii* and expects to receive the rest soon, emended just as carefully; he also refers to Wower's forthcoming edition of Statius.[27] Wower was from Hamburg like Lindenbruch, like him he studied in Leiden, with Scaliger; in 1597 he was in Paris and Lyons, where his edition of Sidonius appeared in 1598, and in 1600 he was in Paris again.[28] It looks

[24] The text, simply that of the second Aldina of 1519, was repeatedly reprinted (1598, 1599, 1605, 1607, 1612), much more often than the commentary.

[25] See van Dam 1996a, especially 316–9.

[26] Scaliger 1627 numbers 212 of 19 April 1600 (I give all dates in Scaliger's letters according to the Gregorian Calendar) and following letters, see also van Dam 1996a, n. 32. In the letter of 19 April Scaliger tries to answer all kind of questions by Lindenbruch about (the texts of) Lactantius and Statius.

[27] Scaliger 1627 number 374. On the edition, "tuam editionem", see also below.

[28] On Wower, see Deitz 1995. He states (134) that in 1597 Wower was in the company of Heinrich Lindenbruch, brother of Friedrich, who arrived in Paris in 1599.

as if Wower participated to some extent, for instance in correcting the scholia, in the edition of his compatriot Lindenbruch.[29] Scaliger, at least, qualified them later as birds of the same feather, when he says: "Lindenbruch est un fat et plagiaire, Lindenbruch, Woveren, grands plagiaires".[30]

Bernaert seems an isolated case, whereas the spider in the Statian web in the North is Joseph Scaliger, who arrived in Leiden in 1593 as a research professor. He was a Calvinist, educated in the South of France, and his private copy of Statius was the 1547 edition from Lyons, rather than any of the early Parisian editions.[31] Like the lack of Statian poetry in the Netherlands, this suggests that the Parisian enthusiasm for Poliziano, *Silvae* and Statius of the twenties and thirties did not penetrate to the Netherlands. Scaliger possessed quite a few editions of Statius, and annotated their margins,[32] but the most intriguing part of his *curae statianae* is found in the letter of 30 March 1600 to Wower. There he writes "Every day I expect the notes written by Poliziano in the margin of his book, copied out of his very old manuscript. Your edition will be distinguished by them".[33] Two collections of marginal notes made by Poliziano exist(ed): those made in the mar-

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On Friedrich, see Horváth 1990, and 1988, which I could not consult. The three Hamburgers had studied together in Leiden, see also van Dam 1996b, 79–80.

[29] Did Wower send Lactantius in galley-proofs to Scaliger? He once was one of Scaliger's favourites, so much so that Scaliger's enemy the infamous Caspar Scioppius, spread the story that their relationship was sexual, see Deitz 1995, 134. Dr Dirk van Miert pointed out to me that during his Italian tour Wower also inspected a manuscript of the *Silvae* in the Bibliotheca Medicea in Florence, "sed valde inconditum et manu recentiori" (Woverius *Epistulae* 223–4, of 7 December; the year is not mentioned but must be 1601), see also below. Gronovius refers to Wower and this manuscript in his *Diatribe* (ed. Hand p. 108). The part played by Scaliger in these Statius edition(s?) remains unclear.

[30] *Scaligeriana* 1666 s.v. Lindenbruch, see also under Woveren. Cf. van Dam 1996b, 80.

[31] The rare one by Hieronymus Aleander (c. 1510), and the 1530 edition by Colinaeus. Scaliger's 1547 private copy is now Leiden University Library shelfmark 757 F 17.

[32] See van Dam 1996a, n. 36, where four editions are mentioned, the most recent one a copy of Bernaert's 1595 text collated with the ms. Senensis. That book was sold to G.J. Vossius, and is now in Göttingen university library (8 COD MS PHILOL 146). On Scaliger's conjectures on the *Silvae*, see also van Dam 1996, n. 32; some of them are in Courtney's OCT.

[33] Scaliger 1627 n° 374, 30.III.1600: "In diem expecto quae Politianus olim Sylvarum margini ex vetustissimo codice annotarat. Ea multum editionem tuam exornabunt …".

gins of his *codex domesticus*, which he transcribed and sent to Beroaldo in 1494. This *codex domesticus* was probably a copy of Calderini's commentary (1475). And secondly, the famous notes in his copy of the editio princeps (1472), the so-called *exemplar Corsinianum*, where Poliziano mentions his *liber vetustissimus*, Poggio's manuscript of the *Silvae.* Scaliger's phrasing suggests the latter notes ("ex vetustissimo codice"), but even if he meant something less exciting, how would Scaliger, in Leiden, come by these notes?[34] The provisional answers supplied here do not at all solve the riddle: Scaliger did receive notes, from his English friend Richard Thomson, author of theological works of Arminian tendency, but also a translator of Martial.[35] Scaliger's correspondent J. de Bumery announced from London on 27 May a letter by Thomson with some autograph fragments of Poliziano. Scaliger received this letter before 11 July, and returned the notes some time before the end of December. He refers to the notes as *schedium* and *schediolum Politiani*, but gives no information at all as to its contents or origin or relation with the *Silvae*.[36] Must we really imagine that these notes were autographs, as Bumery claims?

If Scaliger was the motor behind the study of Statius, possibly his most ambitious pupil in this field was Petrus Scriverius (1576–1660), son of a wealthy merchant, later immensely rich by a judicious marriage. Together with Hugo Grotius, Daniel Heinsius and Joannes Meursius he belonged to Scaliger's inner circle. Scriverius worked as a private scholar, and owes his fame mainly to his antiquarian work. In his youth he had a reputation of working on many things without

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[34] See Courtney's OCT xi–xiv. In van Dam 1996a I mentioned this letter and Poliziano's notes, but did not yet know the other letters concerning the question.

[35] On Thomson, see Oxford Dictionary of National Biography 54 (2004), 549–50 (J.D. Moore), Milward 1978, 37–8, 95–6. He had one Dutch parent, but lived in England and was fellow of Clare Hall, Cambridge. His strongly Arminian *Diatriba de amissione et intercisione gratiae et iustificationis* was published in Leiden in 1616, through the agency of Bishop Overall and Hugo Grotius. In Scaliger 1627 there are eleven letters from Scaliger to Thomson.

[36] I owe this information to the generosity of Dr. Dirk van Miert, one of the editors of the Scaliger Correspondence (see http://warburg.sas.ac.uk/scaliger/indexjjscaliger.htm). Bumery writes "Vous aurez vne lettre dudict Seigneur Thomson auec quelques fragments escrits de la main propre de Politien, vn peu tard ... ", Scaliger to Richard Thomson, 11 July (Scaliger 1627, 503) "Quum tuas postremas accepi una cum schedio Politiani …", 26 December (Scaliger 1627, 501–2) "Non dubito quin … Politiani schediola, quae ego in epistolam conjeceram, ne deerrarent, tibi sint reddita ...". It is unknown to me where Thomson's library went after his death.

ever publishing, for which his friends dubbed him ***Lentulus***, Laggard. He collected editions of Statius and annotated them with zeal, sometimes gathering his notes into small books.[37] He suggested a number of emendations to Gevartius for his 1616 edition, for which he is repeatedly quoted as "amicus noster Petrus Scriverius", and was presented with a copy; others he apparently reserved for Gronovius, when that scholar prepared his ***Diatribe in Statii Silvas*** of 1637. More than once Scriverius offered him substantial collections of critical notes on the ***Silvae***. Gronovius' condescending characterization of Scriverius' work as "totally unsound" in a letter to Claude de Saumaise is far to seek in the obsequious letter which he sent to accompany the printed ***Diatribe***, where Scriverius' notes have become ***doctissimae***.[38]

[37] On him see Tuynman 1977 and Langereis 2001, 105–54. Scriverius was also a prolific composer of poetry. This and the (far more important) philological work of this elusive scholar, whose motto was ***lare secreto***, have been largely neglected. Scriverius possessed the following books on Statius (see ***Bibliotheca Scriveriana ...*** 1663): "Opera commentata vetustissimae impressionis" (folio n° 31), probably Scaliger's Calderini edition, which was bought by Scriverius in the auction of Scaliger's books; the edition by Colinaeus, Parisiis 1530 (8° n° 105); the second edition by Gryphius, Lyons 1559 (12° n° 71); a "Statius cum not. Placidi Lactantii, typ. Plantin. 1600" (an unknown edition, 4° n° 53); "Notae et coniectanea in Sylvas, Fed. Morel 1602" (12° n° 70); the 1618 edition by Emericus Cruceus 1618 (4° n° 51). Then he possessed a manuscript of Io. Gevartius' 1616 commentary on Statius: "***Papinianae lectiones***" (Libri Appendiciarii, mss. n° 24, probably Gevartius' autograph). That is not all, he possessed and annotated the following books: the Bernaert edition of 1595 (now Leiden University Library 757 F 17, auction catalogue 8° n° 103 or 104, Scriverius possessed two copies of this book); the edition Lindenbruch 1600 (now in Göttingen University Library, as 8 AUCT LAT IV, 4033(?), annotated in 1606, ***descr.*** F.A. Menkius, cf. Kohlmann ***Thebais*** BT 1884); the edition by Gevartius of 1616 (now Leiden University Library 757 F 22 (8° n° 102, this is the copy Gevartius presented to Scriverius). Transcripts of Scriverius' marginalia in this book were made by Abr. or Joh. Gronovius the younger, both on loose papers and in the margin of the 1671 edition by Veenhusen, now Leiden University Library 757 F 27. His unpublished notes are mentioned in Hand's 1817 edition of the ***Silvae*** (I.1–3) pp. LXLVII–LV as n° 21. In his published ***Anecdota Philologica*** of 1737 there is exactly one emendation of Statius (p. 31, on ***Th***. 1.703).

[38] Gronovius to Salmasius 24.III.1637 (Burmann 1727, II n° 294 (p. 536)) "A Scriverio nuper iterum accepi libellum (non enim epistolam) emendationum ad Silvas. Quid quaeris? Ὑγιὲς οὐδὲν, nosti caetera", cf. ***ibid.*** 297, Gronovius to Salmasius, 11.V.1637 on Scriverius' "pertinax inscitia", Gronovius to Scriverius, undated (see Dibon, Bots and Bots-Estourgie 1974, p. 471), in Matthaeus 1738 III pp. 716–7 "… ipsa [Diatriba] ultro se accusatum ad te venit, vir maxime, aut supplicatum potius, ne propter vilitatem operis spernas autorem ipsique ignoscas quod splendorem interdum illustrissimi nominis tui quaesiverit … nunc, rogo, si tamen ullam horam tam indigne perdere poteris, ut haec legas …".

Whether Scriverius was Scaliger's most industrious pupil or not, his most brilliant pupil was Hugo Grotius (1583–1645), a certified genius.[39] In one of his earliest works, a Greek Pindaric Ode, eleven-year old Grotius showed that he was the first poet since Antiquity to have grasped the workings of Pindar's metre. Barely fourteen years old, he finished an edition and commentary of Martianus Capella. At sixteen Grotius published his edition of *Syntagma Arateorum*, that is Aratus and the translations of Cicero, Germanicus and Avienus.[40] His Lucan appeared in 1614. But Grotius did much more than editing texts, he was an *uomo universale.* Born from a patrician family, he studied in Leiden with Scaliger and received a doctorate of law in Orléans in 1598, when he had just turned fifteen. In Holland he made a lightning career in politics, which brought him nearly to the top; but then he was imprisoned in 1618, as a result of the religious and political troubles which tore the Dutch Republic apart in the 1610's. Condemned to life imprisonment he made a famous escape from his castle-prison in 1621 in a bookchest, a ruse devised by his energetic wife. Apart from a stay of a few years in Hamburg, in the early 1630's, he lived in Paris for the rest of his life, from 1635 onwards as the Ambassador of Sweden, an exile from the distant fatherland, feeling hurt and wronged. He is often considered a jurist, on account of his world-famous legal treatise on international conflicts *De jure belli ac pacis* of 1625, but he was also a historian—Grotius himself considered his history of the Dutch Revolt one of his most important books—, an important and productive theologian—until the 20th century *De veritate religionis christianae* was his most often printed work—a statesman, and not least, a poet. In short, he was a true philologist, or so I like to think.[41]

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[39] On Grotius the new standard biography is Nellen 2007. Nellen 14 cites a 1926 study of 300 geniuses from 1450–1850 by C.M. Cox, where Grotius ranks third, after Goethe and Leibniz.

[40] Scaliger later advised Wower against a new edition of Aratus, because "it is impossible to surpass the edition of Grotius" ("melior ea, quam Grotius dedit dari non possit": Scaliger 1627, 718, of 12 December 1602). In his letter from Florence (above note 29) Wower had also mentioned a manuscript of Germanicus' *Aratea* "*quem te auctore aliquando me editurum spero*". See van Dam 1996b, 74–5, 81–2, also n. 21 for the Pindaric Ode.

[41] Ter Meulen and Diermanse 1950 have 1135 bibliographical entries, distributed over nine categories: poetry, philosophy, classical philology, international law, history, law, politico-religious work, theology, letters.

One of Grotius' early poems is the *Silva ad Cochlinum*, written when the addressee, the German preacher Johann Küchlein, became dean in the Theological College founded by the States of Holland.[42] This is something of a *Silva* in the Politianic sense of the word, although it is rather short (75 lines): as Poliziano in separate poems introduced his courses and spoke of poetry in general, so, as a kind of *praelectio* to Küchlein's courses, Grotius describes and praises the University with its wisdom in lofty tones, enumerates its eminent teachers, above all, of course, Joseph Scaliger, and ends on the praise of Küchlein's didactic qualities. Grotius' other *Silva* is far more mature, the *Silva* he addressed in 1621, after his escape to Paris, to François-Auguste de Thou in remembrance of his father, the famous historian Jacques-Auguste De Thou.[43] This poem is a worthy descendant of Poliziano's *Silvae*: it is a separate publication in hexameters, of around 400 verses. It combines elements of consolation and praise of the dead with catalogues of poets in poetical terminology in the same vein as Poliziano, with almost allegorical depictions of human qualities, with praise of God and of Grotius' own wife who delivered him from his prison. Variation is one of its characteristics. Here and there Grotius imitated Statius' *Silvae*: *… mens lubrica vitae / egressa* ("the mind which escaped the perils of life", Grotius p. 4) // *et caecae lubrica uitae / effugit* ("He escapes the perils of blind life", Statius 2.1.221–2). *Libera sidereos attollet Gallia vultus* ("Free France shall raise her radiant countenance", Grotius p. 14) // *Exere semirutos subito de puluere uultus, Parthenope* ("Raise your half-buried countenance from the sudden shower of dust, Parthenope", Statius 5.3.104). Grotius ends his poem by comparing himself to a small skiff sailing next to the mighty merchant ships of the Dutch East India Company, which represented De Thou and his likes.

> Sic ubi Atlanteo vela explicuere profundo
> Eoum Batavis referentes portubus annum
> Armigerae naves, communes detinet Euros
> Cymba brevis cernique in eisdem fluctibus audet

[42] Grotius *Poetry* I 2A 1, 49–57, cf. I 2B 1, 32–3.

[43] *Silva ad Franciscum Augustum Thuanum*, Lutetiae [probably Leiden] 1621, cf. ter Meulen and Diermanse 1950 number 137. On De Thou, see De Smet 2006, on Grotius and De Thou 140–1, 186, on the *Silva* as Grotius' introduction to the Parisian *Cabinet Dupuy* Nellen 2007, 299–301.

> In this way, when the ships equipped with cannons, bringing the harvest of the East to Dutch ports, unfurl their sails on the Atlantic Ocean, a little skiff profits from the same south-east winds, and ventures to be seen in the same waters

Here Grotius alludes to two passages from Statius. In the first Domitian's minister Abascantus is compared to the emperor, and by implication the poet to the mighty patron.

> sic, ubi magna nouum Phario de litore puppis
> soluit iter iamque innumeros utrimque rudentes
> lataque ueliferi porrexit brachia mali
> inuasitque uias, in eodem angusta phaselos
> aequore et immensi partem sibi uindicat austri.
>
> (*Silvae* 5.1.242–6)

> So, when a great ship has started a new voyage from Pharian shore and already stretched countless ropes on either side and the broad arms of her sail-bearing mast, and launched out upon her way, a narrow pinnace on the same sea claims part of the measureless South Wind for herself

The second passage refers to Statius' mighty patron, the *praefectus urbi* Rutilius Gallicus, who recovered from illness (but died before the poem was published).

> immensae ueluti conexa carinae
> cumba minor, cum saeuit hiems, pro parte furentis
> parua receptat aquas et eodem uoluitur austro
>
> (*Silvae* 1.4.120–2)

> as a little skiff attached to a great ship, when the storms blow high, takes in her small share of the raging waters and tosses in the same south wind.

The choice of this (original) comparison for imitation, adapted to the modern times of the Dutch seaborne Empire, was especially apt for someone who, like the humble poet Statius with respect to the powerful (and deceased) *praefectus urbi*, tried to carve out a place for himself among new patrons.[44] The poem was an immediate hit. Grotius' friend the learned Gerard Vossius praised it abundantly, and compared it, inevitably, to Statius.[45] However, it is Statius and his *Silvae* trans-

[44] On the comparison, see Gibson 2006a, 166–7. Gronovius ends the dedication of his *Diatribe in Statii Silvas* to Grotius' cousin Graswinckel with the first passage.

[45] *Grotius Correspondence* n^{o} 691, ca. 12.IX.1621 (p. 134) "Quod amoenissimo Sylvae tuae vireto animum oculosque meos pascere suaviter volueris quantas possim

formed by Poliziano; and this is clear from what Vossius liked in the poem: the intricate Greek periphrases for the names of some friends, and especially the catalogue of classical authors; also the digression about Grotius' wife which had moved Vossius to tears. Others joined the chorus of praise. Of them the French Ambassador Du Maurier singled out the didactic and poetical elements of the poem for praise, together with its broad application.[46] All these ingredients suggest the idea of one, ambitious composition in the Politianic vein, rather than a poem within a book of improvised or occasional poetry.

Let us return to Grotius' early poems. Grotius later claimed always to have liked Statius, and in his youth he demonstrated, like Poliziano, that the Statius of the *Silvae* is apt for imitation.[47] The 1601 epicedion for Geertrui van Oldenbarnevelt, the daughter of Grotius' patron, for instance, is almost a pastiche of Statius.[48] For his epithalamia, the situation is somewhat different. Grotius wrote five or six of them: one in 1600, two in 1603, one in 1606, one in 1608, and a whole series of wedding poems on his friend Pottei in 1604 which is an imitation of Claudian's *Fescennina de nuptiis Honorii*. There is a certain evolution in this series: almost all take Statius' *Epithalamium Stellae* as their

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ago gratias. Equidem multum in ea me delectavit. Cuiusmodi si *primum calorem atque impetum* secutus facis, *quod Sylvae nomen ostendit*, quid fuisset si lenta Maronis cura placuisset? ... Statium sane longe post te relinquere mihi videris" (my italics HJvD). Note the allusion in the last sentence to *Thebais* 12.816–7 *nec tu diuinam Aeneida tempta, / sed longe sequere et uestigia semper adora*, also employed, for instance, by Wower in a liminal poem for Vulcanius' edition of Agathias: "Iamnunc Aonia crinem circumdate serta./ Salve, te veneror, vestigia semper adorans".

[46] *Grotius Correspondence* n° 673, 04.VIII.1621 (p. 115) "… la belle et rare pièce .. une très belle et proffitable leçon, qui comprend tout ce que l'homme peut et doit apprendre, pour estre proffitable non seulement à celuy auquel ell'est adressée, mais aussy à toutes les ames bien nées et enclines aux lettres".

[47] *Grotius Correspondence* n° 2815, 28.X.1636 (p. 468), to Gronovius "horas Statianis foliis impendis, valde id me iuvat, qui scriptorem illum etiam in illo versuum genere cum mira maiestate floridum colui semper", also n° 3377, 10.XII.1637 (p. 779), to Gronovius "Papinium ... magni feci semper", n° 4175, 18.VI.1639 (407), to Claude Sarrau "Inspexi Silvarum Statianarum amati semper mihi operis loca".

[48] Some examples: Aspice si perfers *nigrae sollemnia pompae* / tristesque exsequias et matronale feretrum / … **desolatosque penates** (Grotius 20–4) // ipse etenim tecum *nigrae sollemnia pompae* / spectatumque Vrbi scelus et puerile feretrum / … **desolatique penates** (*Silv.* 2.1.19–20, 67). Also: **Livida** non aliam quaerunt dum **fata** nocendi / *invenere viam*, quamquam quid non licet illis? / Quis tamen e variis tam tristia vulnera casus / eligit (Grotius 51–4) // *Inuenere uiam* **liuentia Fata (***Silv.* 5.1.145), Quis deus aut quisnam tam tristia uulnera casus / eligit. (*Silv.* 2.6.58–9, 68–70).

prime example, especially in their structure, often with many local imitations of Claudian. But the earliest one, *Epithalamium Martini*, is (again) a pastiche of Statius, for more than 700 lines.[49] In this poem, a Cupid boasts of having struck the bridegroom, whom he then praises. Venus answers with praise of the bride, just as in Statius' Epithalamium for Stella and Violentilla (*Silvae* 1.2.51–139). In virtually all the other poems this scene recurs with some variations: Venus is in her pleasure-ground in the Dutch province of Zeeland, when Cupid comes boasting about his hunt and praises both husband and wife; or the allegorical figure Batavia travels by the Milky Way to the upper sky in order to sing the praises of bride and groom to the gods, then Venus summons Cupid to strike both lovers. Only in the 1604 poem for Philip William, son of William the Silent, Grotius strikes a different, more philosophical note. And the last poem of the series is completely deviant: it counts only 84 lines, and puts the wedding in question in the christian context of Adam and Eve and the wedding in Cana.

In 1616 Grotius' collected poetry appeared, edited by his younger brother Willem. In one of his letters of instruction to his brother Grotius coyly admitted that this was varied and improvised poetry in the vein of Statius and also Claudian—though more chaste in the epithalamia.[50] Willem wrote the dedication of the volume, a letter full of allusions to the prefaces of the *Silvae*.[51] The volume had a liminal

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[49] E.g. Non ego **lassatas** toties iam *carmina Musas* / in mea vota voco tacitusque quiescet Apollo. / Non HELICON imo nobis spirabit ab antro (Grotius 1–3) // Non HELICONA graui pulsat chelys enthea plectro, / nec **lassata** uoco totiens mihi *numina, Musas*; / et te, Phoebe, choris et te dimittimus, Euhan (*Silv.* 1.5.1–3). Also: Tum **puer ex volucrum numero**, *cui flamma sinistra* / Lucet et in nullo FRUSTRATUM pectore TELUM / Concutitur dextra, tenera sic voce parentem / Alloquitur (Grotius 191–4) // hic **puer e turba uolucrum**, *cui plurimus ignis* / ore manuque leui numquam FRUSTRATA SAGITTA, / agmine de medio tenera sic dulce profatur / uoce (*Silv.* 1.2.61–4).

[50] *Grotius Correspondence* n° 441, 15.XII.1615 (p. 457) "Venit et illud in mentem: fore qui accusent *varietatem* et *desultorium scribendi genus* … Accedit quod ingenium mihi sequax et ductile, ut a cuiusque poetae lectione *incaluerat*, ita ad eius imitationem rapiebatur. Agnosco me ipse alibi Lucani spiritu plenum, interdum Manilii plusquam satis est studiosum, nonnumquam castigatius aliquid ad Statii et Claudiani instar conantem" (my italics HJvD). This letter was included in the edition (ter Meulen and Diermanse n° 1 [p. 8 verso] ff.). Manilius is thrown in as a compliment to Scaliger.

[51] Willem de Groot to the dedicatee, Corn. Vander Myle (ter Meulen and Diermanse n° 1 [p. 2 recto – 8 recto]): "(Why this collection?) … Quod jam *multa carmina ab ipso auctore divulgata erant*, alia etiam latere vix poterant, cum penes eos essent quorum *honori imputabantur*, quae autem *singula placuisse* scirem, operae

poem by G.J. Vossius, which again emphasizes the Statian connection, since it is an imitation of *Silvae* 2.7.[52] Grotius' volume contained three books of *Silvae*; the last one had the *Epithalamia*. The other two were un-Statian: one of *Sacra*, religious poetry, another one entitled *Patria* with patriotic poetry, but also bucolic poems in the style of Theocritus. However, other books in the volume, entitled *Elegiae*, *Farrago*, *Epigrammata* do contain several poems reminding of Statius' *Silvae*. So here we see a combination of longer, more ambitious non-occasional poems (Politianic) with one book of wedding poems into a volume of *Silvae*, and on the other hand Scaligeran occasional poems in other books.[53]

Grotius' love of Statius included critical work. Around 1608 he annotated the margins of his copy with emendations. In late 1615 Caspar Gevartius, the author of *Papinianae lectiones* in 1616, borrowed this copy and kept it for more than a year. Then he returned it with a profuse letter of thanks. In spite of his loud acclaim, Gevartius adopted just one conjecture by Grotius, and that is the only time he mentions him. Nevertheless Gevartius did take more from Grotius' copy, as closer inspection of the margins of Grotius' private copy makes clear.[54]

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pretium me facturum putavi, si universa in unum volumen *congregata emitterem* … (book II of the *Silvae*) totus tuus erat vel sine epistula … cum ipsa omnia tibi uni sint notissima, testem te advoco, cuius an auctoritate fidem inveniant … (the author asks) ut hunc laborem nostrum boni consulas. Cf. Stat. *Silv.* 1 *Praef.* 4–5, 10–1, 16 *cum singuli de sinu meo pro[diissent] congregatos ipse dimitterem.* ... quid quod haec serum erat continere, cum illa vos certe quorum *honori data sunt* haberetis? … Primus libellus sacrosanctum habet testem, *Silv.* 2 *Praef.* 4, 23–4, 27–8 ut *totus hic ad te liber meus etiam sine epistola spectet.* ... Polla Argentaria … *imputari* sibi voluit … si tibi non *displicuerint*, a te publicum accipiant; si minus, ad me revertantur.

[52] 3–11 "… Tu Pharsalica bella detonantem / vitae restituis ... / Vivunt per te Avienus atque Aratus / et Germanicus ... / Sed, ne summa tuae sit ista laudis: / En Silvas similes Papinianas …". Cf. Stat. *Silv.* 2.7.66.

[53] Cf. on Scaliger above, and for more on the occasional poetry of Grotius and his contemporaries van Dam 2008 (n. 20).

[54] Grotius' private copy was the 1600 Lindenbruch edition, now in Leiden University with shelfmark 759 D 8. I put the year at 1608 because in 1636 Grotius wrote to Gronovius that he was just as old as he when he wrote his notes. Gronovius, born 1611, was 25 at the time. On Gevartius, Statius, the Leiden circle and Grotius, see van Dam 1996a, 320–2 with note 30. Gevartius' acknowledgement of Grotius' *retinentius* in 4.4.102 is mentioned there. Here I add three conjectures made by Grotius in his margins which Gevartius silently appropriated: 2.2.95 *grata … grata* M *Graia ... Graia* Grotius, claimed by Gevartius; 3.3.64 *gradu* M *gradi* Meursius *gradus* Grotius (or Livineius), also in Gevaert's text; 3.4.98 *reclusit* M *seclusit* Grotius (also in

Grotius did not come back to Statius until some twenty years later when Johann Gronovius (1611–1671), with whom he had got acquainted during his years in Hamburg, asked him for help in preparing his ***Diatribe in Statii Silvas***. Gronovius was clearly aware of the fact that Grotius had critical notes on the ***Silvae*** ready. Grotius generously sent him from Paris a transcription of the margins of his copy, but since his copy of Gevartius' ***Papinianae lectiones*** had remained in Holland, he could not check what Gevartius had already taken over, and apparently he had not found or made the time to do so when it appeared. Moreover he had no time now to reflect upon his old proposals.[55] However, when Gronovius' ***Diatribe*** appeared, there was no word on Grotius in it, and for a good reason, for Gronovius claimed never to have received a letter from Grotius. Grotius, always slightly paranoiac in things concerning his homeland, supposed that Gronovius, living in The Hague at the time, had been prevented from giving him his due by dark forces, that is to say the Leiden professors, who feared that Grotius would have to be mentioned often (!) in Gronovius' book. To his poor brother Willem he implied that either Gronovius was untrustworthy or that Willem had failed in delivering the letter with the notes. To Gronovius he kept a straight face, telling him that he loved the ***Diatribe***, that he ***had*** answered Gronovius' letter and

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Gronovius *Diatribe* c. 34). In van Dam 1996a, 320 I suggested that marginal notes of high quality by Johannes Livineius marked "p" might refer to Livineius' own efforts. Battezzato 2006 comes to a similar conclusion with respect to other notes by Livineius. In inspecting Grotius' marginalia after a long interval I now noticed several "p"s as well, which refer to Grotius' own emendations, as I think now. It may be useful to make my full transcription of these notes public elsewhere.

[55] On Gronovius and his critical work on the epics, also on the part played by Grotius and others in that, see Berlincourt in this volume (esp. 11, n. 36). ***Grotius Correspondence*** n° 2775, 26.IX.1636 (pp. 409–12), from Gronovius "Ita nuper ad P. Papinii Statii Silvas diatriben scripsi, cuius ... neminem quam te, vir maxime, iudicem esse malim … Utinam autem gravissimae occupationes haec permitterent ut spondere mihi possem te quae ad libros illos observasti mecum communicaturum aut quaestionibus meis responsurum", Grotius answered (***Grotius Correspondence*** n° 2815, 28.X.1636 (pp. 468–73)) "resumpsi in manus editionem Tiliobrogae et quae olim tuae aetatis cum essem margini illevi tibi diiudicanda trado, quorum non dubito quin aliqua occupaverat Gevartius, cuius editio mihi nunc ad manum non est [4 pages of emendations and interpretations follow] … Haec sunt quae a me olim notata reperi quae, qualiacumque sunt—neque enim mihi nunc illa accurate expendendi otium est—tui facio arbitrii." Later Grotius wrote "non relegeram, sed raptim exscripseram quae juvenis olim ad oram annotaveram libri mei": n° 3460, 17.II.1638 (p. 95), to Gronovius. Apart from Grotius' reservations, I suspect that a page from this letter is missing, with the *marginalia* between 3.3 and 4.4.

that he could resend his notes; but that it was too late now as Gronovius and others had already forestalled most of his remarks. Gronovius replied, of course, that he was *so* glad that all his worrying over Grotius' not answering had been for nothing, and that, of course, there was nothing he would like more than having Grotius' notes. Apparently undaunted by these mishaps, he requested Grotius' notes on the epics only a few days later. A month later he repeated the request. Grotius remained in doubt about Gronovius' loyalty until 10 December, when, at last, he sent Gronovius his marginal notes on the *Achilleid* and *Thebaid*. His brother read them together with Gronovius and found them moving (!).[56]

This is not quite the end of Grotius' work on Statius as it is reflected in his letters; in 1639 he corresponded on the text of the *Silvae* with the French scholar Peyrarède from Bordeaux, and the men exchanged notes and conjectures. Grotius even decided to leave his notes on Statius to Peyrarède; but this is for another time.[57]

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[56] *Grotius Correspondence* n° 3212, 19.VIII.1637 (p. 500), to Gronovius "(Compliments for the *Diatribe*) Epistolae quam dudum est quod ad me miseras responderam epistola satis longa, in qua annotaveram quaecumque a me olim, Silvas Papinianas cum legerem, margini erant allita; miror eam ad te non pervenisse. Habeo ejus exemplum, sed non mitto; foret enim inutilis is labor cum pleraque partim abs te partim ab aliis, quos ego non videram, sunt occupata, quaedam autem mea cogitata, ita probabilia ut alia non minus probabilia tibi aut aliis in mentem venerint". Gronovius replied "require epistolam tuam ab eo cui curandam mandasti, aut, siquidem amicorum vel latorum neglegentia periit, quae me iactura maxime ferit, recollige tuas meditationes et vel sero mecum communica" (n° 3228, 29.VIII.1637(p. 524)). In n° 3267, 25.IX.1637 (p. 594), Gronovius asked for Grotius' help with the epics, and included some corrected pages of the Diatribe. Grotius communicated his doubts to his brother in n° 3209, 15.VIII.1637 (p. 496) "... Forte fuere qui ei suaderent id [that he had received my notes] ut dissimularet, ne cogeretur saepe mei facere mentionem ...", 3321, 31.X.1637 (p. 682) "... quae ad Silvas annotaveram. Puto ei per te missa. ... arbitror Lugdunenses magistros, quorum amicitia utitur, obstitisse quominus mei meminisset et consilium dedisse dissimulandi accepta. Willem's reaction was, understandably, somewhat piqued, n° 3348, 16.XI.1637 (p. 730) "Scio me aliquas domi ipsius detulisse epistolas; an notae Statianae iis inclusae fuerint nescio. Rogo ut ea quae ipsi tradi velis non occlusa mihi mittas et sponsorem me offero ex animi tui sententia actum iri. In 3393, 21.XII.1637 (p. 808) Willem writes "legi cum Gronovio Statiana errata ... lustravi et notas, quae me valde affecerunt ...".

[57] *Grotius Correspondence* n° 4167, 16.VI.1639 (p. 407), from Claude Sarrau, n° 4175, 18.VI.1639 (p. 407), to Claude Sarrau, n° 4226, 27.VII.1639 (p. 487), to Claude Sarrau. I conclude with a complete list of letters in which Grotius refers to Statius and his own conjectures or those of others (by number only, easily identified in *Grotius Correspondence*): 452, 499, 691, 1504, 2134, 2775, 2815, 2992, 3209, 3212, 3228, 3233, 3267, 3321, 3325, 3348, 3363, 3371, 3377, 3383, 3393, 3405, 3418, 3442A (in

In his letter to Gronovius, Grotius remarked that others had made the same suggestions that he had offered, and he repeated this to Peyrarède. In fact, it is clear that the same ideas on the text occurred more than once, or that older humanist conjectures may be infinitely recycled in margins and manuscripts. In a similar way composing occasional poetry in imitation of Statius was a common pastime in Leiden, by Heinsius, Scriverius, Meursius and many others, and also elsewhere.[58] However, I do think that the Leiden circle of the early 1600's is unique in the enthusiasm and intensity of its *curae Statianae*, and also in its combination of textual and literary activities. In my opinion Grotius is the key figure within this group, inspired, original and versatile, a worthy successor to Poliziano, someone who worked on the text, imitated and emulated Statius in the spirit of Poliziano, and created new poetry.

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the Supplement volume, n° 17), 3460, 3476, 3788, 3826, 4077, 4121, 4167, 4175, 4225 (in the Supplement volume, n° 17), 4226, 4265, 4922.

[58] Cf. van Dam 2008 (n. 20).

THE EQUINE CUCKOO: STATIUS' *ECUS MAXIMUS DOMITIANI IMPERATORIS* AND THE FLAVIAN FORUM

Michael Dewar

Most contemporary visitors to the Roman Forum not unnaturally conceive of it as stretching from the Arch of Septimius Severus and the foot of the Tabularium in the west all the way to the Arch of Titus and the foreground of the Colosseum in the east. They are encouraged to do so not least by the fact that this is the area bounded by the gates set up by the modern authorities, and marked by the old ticket booths where, for a few thousand lire, it used to be possible to gain entrance to the official archaeological park. Although the lira and the entrance fee have both gone the way of Nineveh and Tyre, they thus continue to exercise a mildly pernicious influence on visitors' perceptions. For in truth, the area so enclosed falls into two distinct parts. To the east there is the upper Via Sacra area, where the road snakes between the Velia to the north and the lower slopes of the Palatine to the south, and then there is the Forum Romanum proper in the west. It is in this western area that we find the open space in front of the Comitium, framed by the Julian basilica on the south, the temples of the Deified Julius and of Castor and Pollux to the east and the south-east respectively, the Basilica Aemilia and the Senate House to the north, and the temples of Concord and Saturn and the Rostra filling in the western end. In antiquity, with the various buildings pressing in and cutting off one's view, all this will have been more obvious to the eye and the Forum more clearly marked off, or at least so it must have been before Hadrian had Apollodorus of Damascus slice off the top of the Velia in order to make the platform for his immense temple of Venus and Rome.

The area of the upper Via Sacra, leading on to the Colosseum, provides a clear example of Flavian propaganda, of a kind that is well attested in literature. Critics are unanimous in agreeing that Nero's Golden House is presented in Flavian and Trajanic authors as the grandiose folly of an egotistical tyrant, the shameful confiscation of land that belonged to the Roman People in order to make it serve the

demands of the most outrageous private luxury.[1] The lake that adorned the pleasure gardens of Nero's palace was filled in by the Flavians to form the site for their mammoth amphitheatre, a building which served both as a locus for public entertainment rather than private debaucheries and also as a locus for the public execution and humiliation of the enemies of the state. The theme of public rather than private luxury continues with the Baths of Titus built just to the north of the amphitheatre. In addition, the new Flavian dynasty is said to shame the old and degenerate one by surpassing it in *pietas*: Nero had left incomplete the precinct and temple of the Deified Claudius on the Caelian hill to the east, but this lamentable disrespect towards his adoptive father is rectified by Vespasian, who, having been raised to prominence by Claudius as one of his favoured generals, now fulfills the obligations of *pietas* as they apply to himself and finishes the construction.[2] As Martial puts it in the best-known formulation of the theme, Rome has been restored to herself:

> hic ubi sidereus propius uidet astra colossus
>   et crescunt media pegmata celsa uia,
> inuidiosa feri radiabant atria regis
>   unaque iam tota stabat in urbe domus.
> hic ubi conspicui uenerabilis Amphitheatri
>   erigitur moles, stagna Neronis erant.
> hic ubi miramur uelocia munera thermas,
>   abstulerat miseris tecta superbus ager.
> Claudia diffusas ubi porticus explicat umbras,
>   ultima pars aulae deficientis erat.
> reddita Roma sibi est et sunt te praeside, Caesar,
>   deliciae populi, quae fuerant domini.

(Mart. *Sp*. 2.1–12)

> Here where the starry colossus looks upon the constellations from a closer vantage-point and the lofty scaffolding rises in the middle of the road, once there shone the hated halls of a savage tyrant, and now in the whole City there stood a single house. Here where there rises the venerable mass of the Amphitheatre, was once Nero's lake. Here where we gaze in wonder at the hot baths, a speedy gift, an arrogant stretch of land had deprived poor men of their homes. Where the Claudian colonnade unfolds its far-spreading shade, was the furthest wing where the

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[1] See in general Griffin 1984, 133–42. The most significant ancient sources are Tacitus (*Ann*. 15.42), Suetonius (*Nero* 31, 39.2) and Mart. *Sp*. 2 (quoted on this page).

[2] See Suet. *Ves*. 9.1 *fecit ... templum ... Diui ... Claudi in Caelio monte coeptum quidem ab Agrippina sed a Nerone prope funditus destructum*.

> palace petered out. Rome has been restored to herself, and under your protection, Caesar, the delights that once belonged to a master are now the property of the people.[3]

Similarly, two major extensions were made by the Flavian emperors to the general Forum area. The first of these was the great Temple of Peace begun after the capture of Jerusalem and completed by Vespasian in A.D. 75. The other was the Forum Transitorium; begun by Domitian and completed by Nerva, who gave it its other name, this architectural triumph monumentalized the old Argiletum, contained a particularly beautiful temple to Domitian's patron goddess Minerva, and filled in the space between the Roman Forum, the Fora of Caesar and Augustus, and the Temple of Peace itself. Indeed, the overarching theme of Flavian propaganda in this nexus of buildings was peace, albeit peace in the traditional Roman sense of peace established and guaranteed by imperial victory. The most famous formulation of this idea in Latin in poetry is, of course, found in the words of Anchises' ghost in the sixth book of the *Aeneid*:

> tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento
> (hae tibi erunt artes), pacique imponere morem,
> parcere subiectis et debellare superbos.
>
> (Verg. *A*. 6.851–3)

> Roman, do you remember with authority to rule the nations (these will be your arts), and to impose custom upon peace, to spare the conquered and to war down the proud.

Examples of literary treatments of this ideological position, however, can easily be multiplied, and in the context of the Flavian period one might therefore compare Statius' description of the careers being followed by his father's former pupils:

> et nunc ex illo forsan grege gentibus alter
> iura dat Eois, alter compescit Hiberos,[4]
> alter Achaemenium secludit Zeugmate Persen,
> hi dites Asiae populos, hi Pontica frenant,
> hi fora pacificis emendant fascibus, illi
> castra pia statione tenent; tu laudis origo.
>
> (Stat. *Silv*. 5.3.185–90)

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3 All translations from the Latin are the author's.

4 I read *Hiberos* with ω (accepted by Shackleton Bailey 2003) against the *Hiberas* of the *codex Matritensis* (accepted by Courtney 1990, 138).

> And now of that company one, perhaps, gives laws to eastern nations, another imposes peace upon the Iberians, another with Zeugma wards off the Achaemenian Persian. These bridle the rich nations of Asia, those the Pontic territories, these use the peace-bringing power of their magistracies to correct our courts, while these hold armies in loyal station. It is from you that their glory sprang.

Arguably the most famous of the surviving Flavian monuments apart from the Colosseum itself was the Arch of Titus, and the Arch of Titus was also very much part and parcel of all this conscious manifestation of the ideology of Flavian Peace. From its dominating position where the Velia gently rose to meet the Clivus Capitolinus it served to unite the composition—the war against the Jews and the despoiling of the Temple of Herod paid for arch, amphitheatre, and temple alike; Jewish prisoners of war carried out much of the construction; and the Menorah and the Ark of the Covenant visible on the famous friezes in the interior of the Arch made a link with the actual objects which were being kept only a few hundred metres away on display as war trophies in the Temple of Peace. What we are dealing with, then, is a specifically Flavian update on a traditional element of Roman ideology: the end of foreign war (against the Jews) but with it also the end of tyranny (that of Nero), and Rome restored to the people under the auspices of the *Pax Flavia*. There is, however, a little more to it than that. It was not acceptable to traditional morality to celebrate triumphs or build monuments for victories in civil war, that is, for victories over fellow-Romans. Perhaps no Latin poet has expressed this idea with greater clarity and force than Claudian, who tells us that

> ... cum Gallica uulgo
> proelia iactaret, tacuit Pharsalia Caesar.
> (Claudian, *De sexto consulatu Honorii Augusti* 399–400)[5]

> Though he boasted at large of his battles against the Gauls, Caesar kept silent on Pharsalus.

Good and gentle fathers of the fatherland ought not to flaunt victories that have cost the blood of Romans alone. Even so, it seems a fair bet that the emphasis in Flavian ideology on just war as a prelude to the establishment of peace with all its blessings was also intended to keep fresh in everyone’s minds the greatest and most immediate benefit of

[5] See Dewar 1996, 283–7 (on lines 392–406) and 290–1 (on line 402).

the rule of the new dynasty, namely the end of the brutal *civil* wars that followed the suicide of the last of the Julio-Claudians.

What then of the other, older part of the monumental centre of Rome, so rich in the associations of antiquity? The Roman Forum proper was much harder to adapt to any consistent ideology, new or old. It was too small, too cluttered, too holy; and it had too many memories to be readily pressed into service in the same way, at least without the kind of whole-scale devastation and rebuilding that was far from practical. There was quite simply no room or opportunity here for the Flavians to build on the vast and space-intensive scale seen to the north and east. The Julio-Claudians had in any case been there before them, cutting down the number of opportunities to claim space even more. The Basilica Julia loomed large, and the Temple of the Deified Julius had encroached yet further upon the small open square, since, though fairly modest in size, it had nonetheless been built on what had once been open space in front of the Regia where Caesar's body had been burnt. The Arch of Augustus, constructed between the Temple of Castor and the Temple of the Deified Julius, also served as a means to claim sway over the south-eastern approach to the Forum. Nor is it a question solely of completely new buildings added by the Julians to the existing complex. The Temple of Castor and the Basilica Julia, for example, were lavishly rebuilt by Augustus after fires in 14 and 9 B. C. Similarly, on the north side, in front of the Basilica Aemilia, Augustus constructed a small porticus dedicated in the names of his adopted sons Gaius and Lucius Caesar. He also paid for the Basilica Aemilia itself to be rebuilt after its destruction in the fire of 9 B. C., although, in one of his most emphatic gestures of republican modesty, the restored building was in fact re-dedicated by a member of the family of the Aemilii Lepidi and so retained its old name. Furthermore, both Caesar and Augustus built new rostra at the western end, while an arch in honour of Tiberius also claimed attention, providing as it did a monumental entrance into the Forum where the Vicus Iugarius debouched into the south-western end between the Temple of Saturn and the Basilica Julia. Lastly, the extremely venerable Temple of Concord, on the western side, was rebuilt as the Temple of Concordia Augusta by Augustus himself and then again by Tiberius, in A.D. 10: it stood, significantly enough, directly in line with the Temple of the Deified Julius. In short, almost every building in the Forum Romanum had been newly erected or else totally rebuilt

by Julius, Augustus, and Tiberius Caesar, thus creating something akin to a unified monumental precinct proclaiming the glory of the Julian House. Yet there were limits to what even those three passionate builders could do: space was, as we have noted, in short supply, and not even in ancient Rome did fires happen every day. Hence the most spectacular activity of the Julians had been the massive increase in public space provided to the north by the Forum of Caesar with its Temple of Venus Genetrix and the adjoining Forum of Augustus with the Temple of Mars Ultor.[6]

The result was that there was relatively little room left for the Flavians. One corner, set back a little from the Forum Square proper, was more or less unclaimed by any truly monumental building, and Vespasian's sons snapped it up. Beyond the angle made by the Temples of Saturn and Concord they constructed a building rather old-fashioned in style, the Temple of the Deified Vespasian. The temple was probably not yet complete when Titus himself met an untimely death only two years after his father, and it is possible that it was then formally dedicated to father and son as the Templum Divorum Vespasiani et Titi.[7] Later Domitian would also rebuild the Curia, enlarging it to such an extent that it was necessary to demolish the old shrine to Janus Geminus that marked the entrance to the Argiletum and then to smooth the god's ruffled feathers by building him a more magnificent shrine, this time to Janus Quadrifrons, in the Forum Transitorium. Janus now looked out in four different directions, thus symbolically uniting the whole conglomeration:

> nunc tua Caesareis cinguntur limina donis
>   et fora tot numeras, Iane, quot ora geris.
> at tu, sancte pater, tanto pro munere gratus
>   ferrea perpetua claustra tuere sera.
>
> (Mart. 10.28.5–8)

> Now your threshold is surrounded by the gifts of Caesar, and you number as many forums, Janus, as you have faces. But do you, holy father, in gratitude for such bounty, hold fast your iron doors with bolt never drawn.

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[6] For the work of Augustus and Tiberius in the Forum Romanum see e. g. Ward Perkins 1981, 39–40, 45, and also Zanker 1988, 81–2, who describes the Forum as a 'showplace of the Julii'.

[7] For the Templum Vespasiani see Ward-Perkins 1981, 70–2. With regard to the common belief that the temple was also dedicated to Titus, however, Thomas 2004, 26 n. 24 rightly urges caution.

That is, the god's four faces more or less looked out on four Fora, the Roman Forum, those of Augustus and Caesar, and the Forum Transitorum itself, and in gratitude for his splendid new home he is asked to keep his gates permanently closed, thereby guaranteeing (what else?) eternal peace under the rule of the Flavians. The theme of peace again emerges strongly in the description of the *sedes* of the new shrine which we find in the poetry of Martial's contemporary Statius:[8]

> Ianus ... quem tu uicina Pace ligatum
> omnia iussisti componere bella nouique
> in leges iurare fori.
>
> (*Silv.* 4.1.13–5)

> Janus … whom, with his neighbour Peace to bind him, you have bidden to lay all wars to rest and swear to obey the laws of the new Forum.

The two Flavian buildings in the Forum Romanum itself, however, belong to opposite ends of Domitian's reign, the temple to the beginning, the new Curia to A.D. 94. This activity may be interpreted as a kind of attempt to claim for the dynasty as much as possible of the north and west sides of the Forum, just as the Julio-Claudians had essentially claimed as their territory pretty much the whole of the south and much of the east sides.

Even so, there was a space that had not yet been built over, namely the open space itself, what we might call the Forum Square. And there was something that came between the building of the temple of Vespasian and the reconstruction of the Senate House, something that, as a consequence of the *damnatio memoriae* to which Domitian was subjected after his assassination, has left very little trace in the archaeological record. We know about it partly from its image on a coin that can be dated to about A.D. 95,[9] but by far our main source for information about it is the poem that Statius wrote to celebrate its dedication, a poem that takes first place in his published collection of occasional poetry, the *Silvae.* That something is, of course, the *Ecus Maximus Domitiani Imperatoris*.

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[8] For a full discussion see Coleman 1988, 69–71.

[9] The coin in question, a *sestertius* (BMC 476+), is usually dated to A.D. 95/96. It depicts a cloaked man on a horse, with his right hand lifted up and the horse's hoof resting on a head. "It is even possible to glimpse the statuette of Minerva under magnification. Therefore this must be the *Equus Domitiani*." (Darwall-Smith 1996, 228–29, with fig. 29). For further discussion see Geyssen 1996, 23–4 and Thomas 2004, 28, n. 34.

Probably dedicated early in A.D. 90 (though some put it later, in the summer of that year, or even in A.D. 91), the great equestrian statue of Domitian was formally a gift from the People and the Senate to the Emperor (*utere perpetuum populi magnique senatus/ munere*, *Silv*. 1.1.99–100, as Statius tells the emperor, "Enjoy for all time the gift of the people and the great Senate"). The statue seemingly celebrated Domitian's victories in Germany, and both the poem and the coin agree in their evidence that the horse was depicted as riding down on the head of a conquered barbarian:

> ... uacuae pro caespite terrae
> aerea captiui crinem terit ungula Rheni.
>
> (*Silv.* 1.1.50–1)

> Instead of a clod of empty earth, his brazen hoof grinds down the hair of the captive Rhine.

This symbolic posture of imperial military domination is well attested in both literature and art. What should attract our attention here, however, is the perhaps not easily predicted ideological interpretation offered by Statius in his commentary on his own description. For in this poem too we have once again the theme of war as the precursor of just peace, since Domitian the conqueror is also Domitian the peace-bringer:

> hunc mitis commendat eques: iuuat ora tueri
> mixta notis, bellum placidamque gerentia pacem.
>
> (*Silv.* 1.1.15–6)

> [in contrast with the baleful Trojan Horse] this one is commended by his gentle rider: upon his face we delight to gaze, where marks are mingled; war it bears and gentle peace.

What we have here is, yet again, the theme of Flavian peace, at first alluded to delicately and in an understated fashion. Statius, however, goes on to develop the theme further as the poem continues, making it central to this poem and hence to the *Silvae* as a collection. Thus, only a few lines later he draws a pointed contrast between Domitian and his neighbour Caesar:

> par operi sedes. hinc *obuia limina* pandit
> qui *fessus bellis* adscitae munere prolis
> primus iter nostris ostendit in aethera diuis,
> discit et e uultu quantum tu mitior armis,
> qui *nec in externos* facilis saeuire furores

das Cattis Dacisque fidem: te signa ferente
et minor in leges gener et Cato Caesaris irent.

(*Silv*. 1.1.22–8)

> The setting matches the work. Here to face it he that, weary of wars, first showed our divinities the way to heaven by the gift of his adopted son, opens wide his threshold. And from your countenance he learns how much gentler in arms are you, you who find it hard to rage even against the madness of foreign enemies, and who pledge your faith to Cattians and Dacians. If only it had been you bore the standard, his son-in-law, less Great than once he was, and Cato would have submitted to the lawful rule of Caesar.

To put it in the dullest topographical prose, the horse faces towards the temple of the Deified Julius. Julius is not attacked directly by the poet, but an opposition is perhaps already being hinted at in the phrase *obuia limina*, while the words *fessus bellis* not only seem to hint at the superior staying power of Domitian, but also subtly evoke the endless succession of wars that Caesar fought—first against foreigners but then against Romans. From the calm and peaceful expression on Domitian's face, Caesar is also said to learn how much "gentler in arms" the present-day emperor is: a pointed reference, of course, to the famed *Caesaris clementia,*[10] which, it is implied, Domitian, and perhaps the Flavians generally, surpass. The real bite of criticism, however, can be heard in that knife-twisting little *nec* in line 26: if Domitian is swift to anger "not even" against foreign foes, we begin to remember how swift Caesar might be said to have been to raise his sword against his own people.[11] The founder of the Julio-Claudian line, that is, initiated civil war, while the Flavians, whose tradition Domitian exemplifies and continues, ended it: or, as the admiring hero of the early Republic Curtius goes on to say when he pops his head up from his *lacus* close by at *Silv*. 1.1.80–1 in order to take a look and see what is happening, *tu ciuile nefas … / longo Marte domas* ("you with

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[10] For the *Caesaris clementia* see in particular Suet. *Jul*. 73–5. A degree of cynicism is evident, however, from antiquity itself, and even Suetonius continues (*Jul*. 76) *praegrauant tamen cetera facta dictaque eius, ut et abusus dominatione et iure caesus existimetur*. English-speaking students of the period are still also liable to be influenced by the power of Sir Ronald Syme's withering prose: Syme 1939, 159–60. For a much more measured view of how the theme is treated by Lucan, the poet whose artistic portrayal of Caesar clearly shaped that of Statius himself, see Leigh, 1997, 53–68; and also Fantham 1992, 164–5 (on lines 439–525).

[11] Consider e. g. Luc. 1.147 *ferre manum et numquam temerando parcere ferro*, 2.439–40 *Caesar in arma furens nullas nisi sanguine fuso/ gaudet habere uias*.

long warfare quell … the wickedness of civil strife”). Indeed, had Domitian been in Julius’ shoes, there would have been no civil war: *te signa ferente / et minor in leges gener et Cato Caesaris irent* (*Silv*. 1.1.27–8: “ If only it had been you bore the standard, his son-in-law, less Great than once he was, and Cato would have submitted to the lawful rule of Caesar”)—thus implying that the emperor who infamously demanded that he be addressed as *dominus et deus* is in fact enough of a republican at heart to satisfy not just Caesar’s rival for *dominatio*, Pompey, but even the arch tyrant-hater Cato himself.

If the equestrian statue of Domitian represents a continuation of the dominant Flavian ideology of peace and civil harmony—of, at one and the same time, victory in Germany and the maintenance of peace in Rome herself—then it can also be interpreted as an attempt to make that ideological claim more emphatically and with more panache than had been hitherto attempted. It did so by virtue of its locale, its size, and its direction. More than that, it expressed a will to dominate and to appropriate. Not everyone would agree. Consider this quotation from John W. Geyssen’s stimulating and sensitive study of the poem, the most comprehensive to date:

> The Statue was part of a triad of Flavian monuments, completed under Domitian, in the area of the Forum. At the northwest end of the Forum and partially hidden by the Temple of Saturn stood the temple to Divus Vespasianus ... At the opposite end, at Summa Sacra Via, Domitian had erected the Arch of Titus, dedicated to Divus Titus. Although it is without the statuary that originally crowned it, its restored height of fifty-one feet [c. 17 metres] suggests that it would have been highly visible from the Forum, competing with the Colossus of Nero, which stood nearby. Given the monuments dedicated to his father and brother with which Domitian framed the Forum, the statue, presented by the Senate and people, was a modest tribute to himself.
>
> (Geyssen 1996, 27)

“Domitian” and “modest” are not words you normally see or hear in the same sentence, not, at any rate, unless there is a negative hovering around to do the necessary qualifying. And it is in this one matter Geyssen’s consistently perceptive analysis needs some modification. Everything that Statius’ poem tells us about the statue of Domitian on his horse implies that it was intended to *dominate* its setting: locale, direction, and size all argue for this.

Consider first the question of locale. As we have seen, although the sides of the Forum Square left little room for the Flavians to build,

there was still the Forum Square itself. That space was largely kept free in order to make it available not just for daily use but for public events such as funerals, triumphs, and theatrical and gladiatorial performances. Although it had a share of monuments from hallowed antiquity, not least the Lacus Curtius and the statue of Marsyas, these were exceptions licensed by their religious and judicial functions. Nor did they take up much space. Domitian's equestrian statue, however, was slapped down pretty much right in the middle of the Forum, or rather not much off centre, across from the Temple of the Deified Julius and right next to the Lacus Curtius. As Statius puts it, it stood embracing the whole Forum:

> stat Latium complexa forum
>
> (*Silv.* 1.1.2)

Statius' phrasing is so vague that it is, unfortunately, of very little help in determining the precise location in which the equestrian statue originally stood. It can be read, however, as suggesting that the statue was placed in the very middle of the Forum, and this consideration appears to have influenced Giacomi Boni who, early in the last century, found what he thought were the foundations for the statue's base in a very central location a little to the north-east of the Lacus Curtius.[12] Boni's view was generally accepted until as recently as a generation ago, when excavations conducted by Cairoli Giuliani and Patrizia Verduchi showed that the foundations identified by Boni were far too early for Domitian's statue, since they predated the Augustan-era pavement of the Forum area. They therefore proposed an alternative location, albeit one very close to Boni's, a little to the north-east, on a roughly rectangular area of concrete and travertine blocks.[13] This proposal, tentative in itself, has been tentatively accepted, not least because no new excavations have revealed an alternative location. In a recent article, however, Michael L. Thomas has pointed out that Giuliani and Verduchi did not excavate in the precise area under discussion and that they may have been unduly influenced by Boni's

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12 See Boni 1904–7, 574–7. I have not been able to consult this work directly, and here rely on Thomas 2004, 21 with n. 4.

13 See Giuliani and Verduchi 1980, 35–49, Giuliani and Verduchi 1987, 133–9. Here too I am indebted to Thomas 2004, 21 with n. 5.

original ideas,[14] while we might add that they too might perhaps have relied too much on the vague phrasing of Statius. Thomas proceeds to offer an exellent argument for an alternative position whereby the equestrian statue would have taken advantage of the well-established interest of Roman architects in sightlines.[15] While scrupulously acknowledging that his suggestion is speculative and that it has not been verified by archaeological investigation,[16] he argues cogently for the possibility that the statue once stood on a site later occupied by the most prominent of the series of honorary columns erected in the time of the Tetrarchs, namely the column which is now known as the Column of Phocas and which perhaps originally bore a statue of Diocletian. This location fits Statius' description very well, since it was also, in broad terms, one from which the statue, in addition to being close to the Lacus Curtius, could 'embrace' the whole Forum. More significantly for the purposes of the present paper, this location also commands the sightline from the Forum Transitorium in such a way that anyone walking south from that great monument to Flavian power and ideology would enter the Forum Romanum through the old Argiletum, and would therefore have the equestrian statue constantly in full view. Moreover, as Thomas argues, it is clear from Statius' description that the statue faced east and that the left hand of the emperor, the one that bore the smaller image of the goddess Minerva, would therefore be the one nearer to such a pedestrian. That being so, the goddess might surely be interpreted as welcoming him from the Forum Transitorium, over which she presided from the new temple raised for her by her favoured son Domitian, into the Forum Romanum where, in company with that same favoured son, she extended her protection over the ancient heart of the state by means of the Medusa's head.[17] Seen this way, the equestrian statue thus functioned as the physical and ideological pivot of the entire Flavian reconfiguring of the Fora-complex as a whole.

Thomas' argument is very persuasive in its own right. It is also naturally attractive to anyone arguing, as we are here, that the position

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[14] Thomas 2004, 32. Another of my debts must here be gratefully acknowledged, that to Professor K.M. Coleman, who not only drew Thomas' article to my attention but with great kindness provided me with a copy.

[15] Thomas 2004, 32–35.

[16] Thomas 2004, 43.

[17] Thomas 2004, 35–40.

of the equestrian statue and the interpretation of it offered by Statius related to wider questions of Flavian ideology and Domitian's great project of stamping upon the monumental heart of Rome a unified vision of his dynasty's role as guarantors of peace. The case can, of course, also be put in reverse: the ideological aspects of Statius' encomium reinforce the suggestion that the placing of the statue at the end of a sightline from the Forum Transitorium to the Forum Romanum would help unite the new constructions of the Flavians with the ancient centre of the city under the protection of Minerva and Domitian themselves. For the central purposes of this paper, as for Thomas' argument, it is enough that Statius talks loosely of the statue's being surrounded by the many buildings of the Forum Romanum.[18] Statius thus succeeds in suggesting that the statue stood, roughly speaking, in the centre of the Forum rather than troubling to be utterly precise in a way that might only serve to undermine his rhetoric: and that is merely what we should expect, since his poem is an encomium concerned with ideology, not a guide book for a walking tour.

The second point identified above was that concerning direction, and here it should be noted that we are told unambiguously that the statue faced not towards the Capitol, the traditional heart of the Roman state, but to the east. That is, it faced the Temple of the Divine Julius:

> ... hinc obuia limina pandit
> qui fessus bellis adscitae munere prolis
> primus iter nostris ostendit in aethera diuis
>
> (*Silv.* 1.1.22–4)

> Here to face it he that, weary of wars, first showed our divinities the way to heaven by the gift of his adopted son, opens wide his threshold.

Statius continues, indicating more clearly that the statue looked out towards the upper Via Sacra:

> at laterum passus hinc Iulia tecta tuentur,
> illinc belligeri sublimis regia Pauli;
> terga pater blandoque uidet Concordia vultu.
>
> (*Silv.* 1.1.29–31)

[18] Thomas 2004, 31.

> But your spreading flanks are guarded, on one side by the Julian building and on the other by the palace of warlike Paullus. The back your father beholds, and Concord with her tranquil face.

That is, the Temples of Concordia and Vespasian are behind it, to the west. It follows of course that the statue faced east, beyond the Roman Forum towards the Upper Via Sacra and to the very spaces that the Flavians had left their mark upon so firmly. But above all, to turn to the third point, that of size, the statue was, Statius assures us, absolutely vast:

> quae superimposito moles geminata colosso
> stat Latium complexa forum?
>
> (*Silv.* 1.1.1–2)

> What is this mass that stands there, redoubled by the colossal figure placed upon it, and embraces the Latian Forum?

Geyssen doubts this. He suggests hyperbole has gone further here even than elsewhere in Statius' work, and that the statue was in practice rather more modest in size. He pays particular attention to the absence of any explicit reference by way of comparison to the other colossal statue in the general area, namely the colossus of Nero, its head replaced by one of Sol, which stood over on the Velia, close to the former vestibule of the Domus Aurea. Indeed:

> while a colossal equestrian statue might have presented an imposing figure of the emperor, its effect would have been diminished as the horse would have overpowered its surroundings and obscured its rider except from a distance.
>
> (Geyssen 1996, 24)

These arguments are not wholly convincing. In the absence of both remains of the actual statue and knowledge of its exact site, it is precisely Statius' claim and its plausibility that remain our surest guide. Here the most striking consideration is the fact that Statius goes out of his way to highlight the question of the statue's size. Whether the poem's transmitted *titulus* (*Ecus Maximus Domitiani Imperatoris*) is Statius' own name for it remains moot,[19] but in any case the phrase merely repeats his own characterization of the statue from the preface to Book One of the *Silvae*, where he tells the dedicatee Stella about

[19] On the question of the authenticity of the *tituli* see Coleman 1988, xxviii–xxxii, and Nauta 2002a, 269–72.

the speed with which he composed *centum hos uersus, quos in ecum maximum feci* ("these hundred lines, which I wrote on the vast horse"). The immense size of the rider and horse alike is his first theme:

> ... superimposito moles geminata colosso
>
> (*Silv.* 1.1.1)
>
> this mass ... redoubled by the colossal figure placed upon it

and it is one of his most insistent themes, indeed the most insistent apart from the question of peace. The statue is so large, we are assured, that it could only have come from heaven, or from the forges of the Cyclopes, who are presumed to be exhausted from making it (*lassum Steropen Brontenque*, *Silv.* 1.1.4). Later it is spoken of more firmly as the work of earthly craftsmen, but we are still told that it must have taken the produce of all the mines of Temese to make it (*Silv.* 1.1.42); the earth itself can barely support it, even though the mighty base would be enough to hold up mountains or even Atlas as he held the heavens on his shoulders (*Silv.* 1.1.56–60). Poetic hyperbole is indeed in play; that is obvious enough. But unless we agree with Frederick Ahl that the poem is not a real panegyric at all, but barely veiled mockery of Domitian,[20] then we must allow for the consideration that a skilled panegyrist would know better than to give such prominence to a theme if it were so far beyond credibility as to invite immediate and unremitting ridicule. It may indeed have been the case that the statue was ill-suited to its locale, that it overpowered its surroundings, and that the visage of the emperor was not easily

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[20] Ahl 1984, 40–124. The work of those scholars who were inclined to suspect irony and subversion in almost all encomium written for 'bad' emperors has had the great merit of provoking more careful thought and analysis of this difficult, and to us moderns almost alien, style of writing. The present paper, as will no doubt be obvious, works on the assumption that the encomium is fundamentally sincere in the sense that it is not intended to undermine itself to the point of meaning the opposite of what it says on the surface or of mocking its subject; for all that, there may still be elements of whimsy and humour in play to offset the solemnity of the occasion and the subject. It certainly does not follow from this position that the poem should be seen as having been simply written to order or as pure propaganda that slavishly reproduces the emperor's self-image. The poet, like the architect, is more fruitfully seen as collaborating in the creation and expression of a harmonious and unified public image for the emperor. For a judicious assimilation and evaluation of Ahl and the kind of argument offered us by work in this vein see now Newlands 2002, 46–73, and for a direct refutation of his arguments as they apply to *Silv.* 1.1 see Nauta 2002a, 422–6.

seen from ground level. Misjudgements do occur, of course. One might hypothesize a disagreement between Domitian and the sculptor or sculptors not unlike the one between Hadrian and Apollodorus of Damascus over the Temple of Venus and Rome: Apollodorus, we are told, wanted a tall podium for the temple, to give it proper dignity and to let it dominate the Via Sacra,[21] but Hadrian opted for a lower podium, which resulted in a squatter appearance generally held to be less appealing. More germane to our concerns here, however, was Apollodorus' complaint that the statues of the seated goddesses Venus and Roma were too big for the cella. "For now," he said rather cattily, "if the goddesses wish to get up and go out, they will be unable to do so." (Dio Cassius 69.4.3–5) But there is another consideration to take into account. The statue would not be seen *only* from ground level. A view from the upper galleries of the Julian and Aemilian basilicas is a different matter, and here we may recall how the friezes on the column of Trajan were surely designed in part to be viewed from the upper floors of surrounding buildings.

As for the Sol-Colossus of Nero, as Geyssen (1996, 25–6) acknowledges, it is effectively "written into" the poem when Statius later alludes to the colossal statue of Apollo at Rhodes (*lumina contempto mallet Rhodos aspera Phoebo*, *Silv.* 1.1.104). In any case, it is not clear that anyone standing by the equestrian statue at ground level could really have seen anything of the Sol-Colossus: it would surely have been largely obscured from view by the sizeable facade of the Temple of the Deified Julius. All this, however, is almost beside the point. We are not on the Velia, and we are not by the site of the Domus Aurea. The predecessor with whom Statius presents Domitian as competing in the Forum Romanum is not Nero, but Julius. The statue confronts Julius' temple, and symbolically challenges Julius' divine status; and moreover, according to Statius, the role of the Julian basilica, the largest Julio-Claudian building in the Forum, is more or less merely to guard Domitian's statue:

> at laterum passus hinc Iulia tecta tuentur
>
> (*Silv.* 1.1.28)

> But your spreading flanks are guarded, on one side by the Julian building

[21] "and he was surely right" is the comment of Ward-Perkins 1981, 123.

The hierarchical element is subtle, but surely clear enough: the great Julian basilica is like a lowly guardsman protecting the sacred presence of the Flavian emperor. Similarly, while Statius does say that the statue is large enough to look into surrounding spaces—into other squares, that is, which are set off by porticoes and temples of their own—, it is not to the Velia and the upper Via Sacra that he draws our attention; rather, it is to the Forum of Caesar:

> cedat equus Latiae qui contra templa Diones
> Caesarei stat sede fori, quem traderis ausus
> Pellaeo, Lysippe, duci (mox Caesaris ora
> mirata ceruice tulit); uix lumine fesso
> explores quam longus in hunc despectus ab illo.
> quis rudis usque adeo qui non, ut uiderit ambos,
> tantum dicat equos quantum distare regentes?
>
> (*Silv.* 1.1.84–90)

> Let that horse yield that stands in the Forum of Caesar facing Latian Dione's temple, which you, Lysippus (for so they say), dared make for the Pellaean general. After that it bore upon its marvelling back the image of Caesar—scarcely could you with wearied eyes discover how far the downward view from this rider to that. Who could be so much a boor that, when he had seen both, he would not declare the horses as far different from each other as their riders?

It is tempting to declare that the point of the panegyric barely needs elaboration for our present purposes, and perhaps we might do so if it were not that even so careful and thorough a scholar as Robin Darwall-Smith can, as it seems, be misled by Statius' phrasing: "Older equestrian statues in the vicinity are upstaged,' he tells us, 'such as the statue of Caesar nearby" (Darwall-Smith 1996, 232). In fact, Statius says nothing of other statues in the plural, and speaks only of this single rival, a horse that once bore Alexander and now bears Caesar. Domitian's horse surpasses it in size and no doubt in beauty too: as a ruler, Domitian also eclipses both. It must, however, be emphasized again that Statius is, here at least, apparently not interested in drawing the standard Flavian comparison with Nero. The comparison is not with the last representative of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, but with its founder. Indeed, although there is not space here to pursue the idea with any great vigour, it seems that the association of Caesar with Alexander may perhaps also be intended to contribute to the subtle process by which it is hinted that even the greatest of the Julio-Claudians are in some measure inferior to the Flavians. Alexander,

after all, is no model of perfect kingship in the Roman rhetorical and literary tradition. In this context one might consider, for example, Lucan's hostile presentation of Caesar's fascination with Alexander, and how he shows Caesar rushing, when he reaches Egypt, to go and gaze at the body of the *Pellaei proles uaesana Philippi* ("the crazed offspring of Philip of Pella"), the *felix praedo* ('"the lucky brigand") (Luc. 10.20–1).[22]

At any rate, it seems clear enough that, between them, Julius and Augustus had done almost as much as anyone could to make the Forum Romanum into Julian space. Domitian's statue, however, by position and size wrenched away the eye from their achievements. Its importance and its unusualness alike are brought home to us not least by the decision of Darwall-Smith to allocate space to it in a lengthy and richly detailed book otherwise concerned wholly with Flavian architecture. As he explains: "This is the only non-architectural monument which I discuss, but its prominent position in the centre of the Forum makes it as much an architectural feature as, say, a triumphal arch." (Darwall-Smith 1996, 227) Indeed, we can go further and argue that it can be seen to have functioned as the unifying element in an elaborate series of architectural monuments laying emphasis on the dynasty's commitment to the maintenance of peace in Rome and her dominions by the just reduction of *superbi*, a process of quasi-divine activity that had, by the time the horse was erected, already shown two Flavian emperors how to follow the path to the stars laid out by Caesar and Augustus. That a third would follow that path in due course—but, it was to be hoped, not yet, not yet!—was, for Statius, utterly certain:

> certus ames terras et quae tibi templa dicamus
> ipse colas, nec te caeli iuuet aula, tuosque
> laetus huic dono uideas dare tura nepotes.
>
> (*Silv.* 1.1.105–7)

> May you with firm resolution love earth and yourself inhabit the temples that we dedicate to you. Let not heaven's palace delight you, and may you rejoice to see your grandsons offer incense to this gift.

[22] Denunciation of Alexander as a madman and a brigand who destroyed the liberty of the world to satisfy his crazed ambition was a well-established theme in the Roman tradition of *declamatio*: see Morford 1967, 13–9. For similarly sceptical or hostile references to Alexander in Statius see *Silv.* 2.7.93–5, 4.6.59–74 and 106, and to *Pellaeus regnator* at *Silv.* 4.6.59–60 compare Mart. 9.43.7 *Pellaei ... tyranni*.

That is, the statue laid claim not merely to the Forum Square of Rome, but to heaven itself. Seeking as it did to dominate the Forum Square, the *Ecus Maximus* of Domitian was a very large, very aggressive equine cuckoo in what had been intended to be a Julian nest. The Deified Julius and the Deified Augustus dwell in their temples beyond the confines of the Forum Romanum, but the still-living Domitian is permanently there at the City's very heart. Still more, even heaven itself, in the form of all the deified Flavians, comes down to this very spot when night falls, that same night which poets conventionally celebrate as the time of peace:

> hoc et sub nocte silenti,[23]
> cum superis terrena placent, tua turba relicto
> labetur caelo miscebitque oscula iuxta.
>
> (*Silv.* 1.1.94–6)

> In the silence of the night, when earthly things are pleasing to the gods above, your folk will leave the heavens and glide down to it, and join their kisses with yours in a close embrace.

The mighty horse stands at the world's very heart; it stands, that is, in the self-same place where earth and heaven meet; and all three—Forum, earth, and heaven—belong to the Flavian dynasty.[24]

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[23] I read *hoc* with Courtney 1990, 5 against the *huc* of the *Itali* (accepted by Shackleton Bailey 2003, 38).

[24] Time and Fortune would of course disprove Statius' prophecy. Quite what happened to the equestrian statue will never be known for certain, but the imagination is easily stimulated by Pliny the Younger's description in his panegyric to Trajan of the joy with which the people destroyed the images of the discredited emperor: *illae* [*sc. statuae*] *autem <aureae> et innumerabiles strage ac ruina publico gaudio litauerunt. iuuabat illidere solo superbissimos uultus, instare ferro, saeuire securibus, ut si singulos ictus sanguis dolorque sequeretur. nemo tam temperans gaudii seraeque laetitiae, quin instar ultionis uideretur cernere laceros artus truncata membra, postremo truces horrendasque imagines obiectas excoctasque flammis, ut ex illo terrore et minis in usum hominum ac uoluptates ignibus mutarentur* (*Pan.* 52.4–5). For the picture compare Juv. 10.58–64 *descendunt statuae restemque secuntur,/ ipsas deinde rotas bigarum inpacta securis/ caedit et inmeritis franguntur crura caballis./ iam strident ignes, iam follibus atque caminis/ ardet adoratum populo caput et crepat ingens/ Seianus, deinde ex facie toto orbe secunda/ fiunt urceoli, pelues, sartago, matellae.*

BATTLE NARRATIVE IN STATIUS, *THEBAID*[*]

Bruce Gibson

Introduction

Battle narrative is difficult. Difficult for us, in attempting to understand something which perhaps does not have an immediate place of prestige in our cultures nowadays,[1] but it is also difficult for poets. Homer had already acknowledged this implicitly with the invocation of the Muses before the Catalogue of Ships in *Iliad* 2 (*Il.* 2.484–93): there is also the often forgotten moment in *Iliad* 12.175–6 where the poet acknowledges the practical problem of narrating the complexities of battle:[2]

> Ἄλλοι δ’ ἀμφ’ ἄλλῃσι μάχην ἐμάχοντο πύλῃσιν·
> ἀργαλέον δέ με ταῦτα θεὸν ὣς πάντ’ ἀγορεῦσαι·

> The others fought the battle at different gates: it is difficult for me to narrate all this as if I were a god.

The story of the Seven against Thebes offered Statius the chance to narrate battle at the various gates. But although he provides a list of Theban contingents and their commanders leaving from the seven gates (*Theb.* 8.351–7), he does not provide anything like the classic set-piece accounts of the Seven that we find in Aeschylus' *Septem*

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[*] I am indebted to Robin Seager and Tony Woodman for their detailed responses to an earlier version of this paper. I am also grateful to members of the audience who contributed to the discussion when this paper was first delivered in Amsterdam in November 2005, and to the editors for their comments and encouragement during the process of revision

[1] Cf. Vessey 1973, 283 on the battle narrative in the *Thebaid*: "These are the most Homeric scenes of the epic and, for a modern reader, perhaps the most difficult to appreciate."

[2] The authenticity of these lines was doubted (the A-scholion on 12.175 goes so far as to describe the poet's expression in 12.176 of the difficulty of narration as laughable, *geloion*): see the scholia on *Iliad* 12.175 and 12.175–81 in Erbse 1974, 335–7; cf. Taplin 1992, 166 n. 22. The notes of Hainsworth 1993, 336–7 on 12.175–8 and 176 are more sympathetic. Perhaps compare Thuc. 7.44.1, on the difficulties for combatants in knowing what is going on during a battle.

(375–652) and Euripides' *Phoenissae* (106–81, 1104–40).[3] The gates are in fact rarely referred to in Statius: one exception is the passage at 10.493–508 where the Thebans are in retreat after the night raid of Thiodamas, and all the gates are closed, with the exception of the Ogygian gates where some Spartans momentarily get into the city. Nevertheless, the decision not to include a wholesale picture of combat at the gates of the kind which we find in tragedy illustrates from the outset Statius' innovative approach to battle narrative.[4]

This paper will examine various techniques of battle narrative in the *Thebaid*. I will be considering the topic under various headings: first of all, density of coverage, and then narrative strategies and devices which are employed by the poet, including what one might loosely refer to as Roman or anachronistic intrusions into the poet's presentation of warfare. There are of course many features which Statius has in common with Homer and Virgil in the presentation of battle,[5] and it would certainly be possible to document such aspects in the same way in which scholars such as Willcock and Horsfall have written about Virgil, for example.[6] However, it may be instructive to look for areas of difference as well, which will be the focus of this paper.

Coverage

The issue of density of coverage is an important one in the *Thebaid*. The book's composition in twelve books alone, and also the fact that fighting at Thebes begins in Book 7 might suggest obvious grounds for comparison with Virgil's *Aeneid*.[7] However, one point that does emerge is how Statius foreshortens battle narrative in his poem, sometimes to an extraordinary degree. In part we may see this as Statius' response to the problem of how to sustain the narrative and the inter-

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[3] For the gates of Thebes, see Apollod. 3.6.6 and Paus. 9.8.4–7 with Frazer ad loc.; cf. Henderson 1998b, 226. While Diggle accepts Morus' deletion of the list of the Seven at E. *Ph.* 1104–40, see Mastronarde 1978 for a defence of these lines.

[4] See e.g. Vessey 1973, 270–316, and McNelis 2007, 124–51 for useful treatments of the second half of the *Thebaid*.

[5] For a treatment which stresses the traditional aspects of Statius' battle narrative, see Miniconi 1951, 95–9.

[6] Willcock 1983; Horsfall 1987. Note also the invaluable discussions of Virgilian and post-Virgilian battle scenes in Raabe 1974, 166–241.

[7] For links between *Thebaid* 7 and *Aeneid* 7 (and also 1) see Smolenaars 1994, xviii–xxvi; see also Criado 2000, 75–7; Ganiban 2007, 97–116.

est of the readers. This is an issue that is arguably germane to martial epic in general.[8] Thus Harrison in his commentary on *Aeneid* 10 remarks that "The fundamental problem in writing the 'Iliadic' *Aeneid* was that of maintaining vitality and interest in a long epic war-narrative".[9] A few examples of how Statius achieves compression to this end may be given here.

If we consider the outbreak of fighting in *Thebaid* 7, there are really two different beginnings to the combat: the episode of the sacred tigers who are killed by Aconteus, who is then slain by a priest of Bacchus (*Theb.* 7.564–607), leading to a confused outbreak of general fighting (*Theb.* 7.608–27), which is then separated off from the beginning of fighting proper and the death of Pterelas at *Theb.* 7.632–9 by the poet's invocation of the Muses (*Theb.* 7.628–31). As Smolenaars notes in his commentary, the killing of the sacred tigers of Bacchus is comparable to the episode of Silvia's stag in *Aeneid* 7.[10] However, Statius already is narrowing the focus of attention, especially if one compares *Aeneid* 7 here. In Virgil, the stag's killing leads not into set-piece battle but a rustic brawl, as indicated by the descriptions of the Italian rustics seizing whatever weapons are available for combat (Verg. *A.* 7.507–8), which eventually leads to the killing of Galaesus (*A.* 7.535–9). Not even then does Virgil produce his invocation of the Muses, which in any case introduces the catalogue of Italians (*A.* 7.641), not the opening of combat, since the catalogue is preceded by Allecto's report to Juno and the formalisation of hostilities when the gates of war are opened. Indeed, formal fighting in the *Aeneid* does not begin until Book 9, with Turnus hurling his spear (*A.* 9.52), though as it happens the Trojans are under siege. The first proper fighting in the second half of the *Aeneid* is in fact, oddly, the night raid of Nisus and Euryalus, which is followed by a pause with the reaction of Euryalus' mother, before a general scene of battle at *A.* 9.503–24 leading to the invocation of the Muses that precedes Turnus'

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[8] Thus Vessey 1973, 283.

[9] Harrison 1991, xxxi; cf. Horsfall 1987, 54: "There are of course moments of high excitement ..., but Virgil lacks the space to invent or develop enough major participants to sustain and vary a complex battle-narrative, and, it has further been suspected, perhaps not unfairly, that the desire was also lacking." It is worth noting that battles could be attractive subject material for readers: see e.g. Tac. *Ann.* 4.32.1 and 4.33.3 with Martin and Woodman 1989, 171 and 175.

[10] Smolenaars 1994, 253.

aristeia at 9.525–8, which really marks the first conventional battle scene of the *Aeneid*.

By contrast, Statius compresses the Virgilian hiatus between the confused phase of impromptu combat and the opening of real fighting, so that once the tigers have been wounded, Statius narrates very rapidly in the space of five lines (*Theb*. 7.603–7) the incident where Aconteus is killed by Phegeus, a priest of Bacchus. There is then a scene of confusion in the camp, with Jocasta fleeing, and the armies become enmeshed in a melee without any of the formal entry to battle which characterises even the opening of battle in *Iliad* 4 after the truce is broken. In Homer, Menelaus is wounded (*Il*. 4.146–7), but there is then a long interval while Agamemnon urges on his commanders and his troops, until the forward movement of the Achaeans and the Trojans at *Iliad* 4.422–45, and the general evocation of the opening of battle at 4.446–456. The first battlefield killing, of Echepolus by Antilochus, takes place at *Iliad* 4.457. By contrast Statius is concerned to stress the lack of order at the beginning of his combat, as reflected in the lines where the chaos of the Argive camp as they prepare to enter battle at the death of Aconteus is subtly merged into a confused engagement with the Thebans (*Theb*. 7.608–27): *nullo uenit ordine bellum*, "war comes with no order", (*Theb*. 7.616). Statius' emphasis on the confusion of war seems far from the kind of situation described by Hans van Wees in his discussion of the battle scenes in the *Iliad*, where van Wees has shown how the dominant mode of battle narration is actually combat between the *promachoi*, the "fighters up front".[11]

Comparison between the opening conflicts of *Iliad* and *Thebaid* makes this plain: at *Iliad* 4.457–8 the poet remarks that "Antilochus was first to take out an armed warrior of the Trojans, Echepolus Thalysiades, a good man among the fighters up front (*promachoi*)", before going on to describe how the man came to be wounded. The Homeric battle thus emerges even from the chaos of Pandarus' shot at Menelaus with a clear-cut beginning: first, there is a large scale evocation of conflict and then there follows the death of Echepolus. Statius, however, strikingly elides pre-battle moments with the death of Ptere-

[11] Van Wees 1997, 680, 687. Cf. Sandbach 1965–6, 34, on Statius: "His battle scenes, unlike those of Virgil, show no sign of generalship or strategy: infantry, cavalry, and war-chariots are committed pell-mell; the fighting is neither Homeric, nor anything else."

las, who is described as being carried by his unreliable horse through the two battle lines (*diuersa per agmina*, *Theb*. 7.633), so that, even after the invocation of the Muses at the start of the conflict, the hasty scenes before the invocation blend into the actual fight, and hence Statius avoids the kind of formal entry into battle that Homer had given in *Iliad* 4.

We can also observe something similar in the manner in which the short series of rapidly narrated killings in *Theb*. 7.640–8[12] is brought to a close with the death of Abas, slain whilst trying to despoil Caeneus, already killed by Haemon. This can be felt as a parallel to the similar moment towards the start of the fighting in *Iliad* 4, where Elephenor, μεγαθύμων ἀρχὸς ʼΑβάντων (*Iliad* 4.464), "leader of the great-hearted Abantes" (which surely explains Statius' choice of the name *Abas* in the *Thebaid*), tries to despoil the body of Echepolus, but is then killed by Agenor. Homer follows up this moment by having a general scene of conflict (*Iliad* 4.470–2), but Statius moves straight from the death of Abas to the episode of Eunaeus' death, with no intermediary scene.

The point can also be made, in respect to degree of coverage, that Statius is unwilling to provide very extended accounts of battle involving minor characters fighting amongst themselves. Examination of the second half of the *Thebaid* reveals only a surprising handful of such passages: *Theb*. 8.438–55, a passage involving several such kills amongst minor characters, 9.670–82, where both sides fight in grief for Hypseus and Hippomedon but with no characters actually named, and a slightly longer passage in Book 10 (10.493–551), where some of the Spartan contingent actually manage to get inside the gates of the city (something that does not occur in the *Iliad*, as reflected in the instruction to Patroclus from Achilles not to attempt to take Troy), and a brief passage in Book 11 (11.39–56) where the attack on the Argive fortifications leads to the death of the trumpeter Enyeus; in book 12 there is nothing in this category at all.

Concomitant to this is the poet's practice of shortening episodes where more significant characters are involved. Thus, as scholars have pointed out, the aristeia of Amphiaraus in Book 7 has much in common with the aristeia of Diomedes in *Iliad* 5,[13] appropriately enough

12 On which see Smolenaars 1994, 288–9.
13 Smolenaars 1994, 322, 344.

in view of the fact that on both occasions the heroes are accompanied by divinities in their chariots. However the aristeia of Diomedes is so large in execution in Homer that the poet in fact breaks up the action in *Iliad* 5 with other material. Thus we have Aeneas' killing of the sons of Diocles and the response of Menelaus and Antilochus (*Il.* 5.541–89), a temporary halt to Diomedes represented by the simile of a person halted by a river (*Il.* 5.597–600), the conflict of Tlepolemos and Sarpedon (*Il.* 5.627–69), an episode of success for Hector, and then the reactions of Hera and Athena. The focus only returns to Diomedes with Athena's encouragement to him at *Il.* 5.793. In contrast to this, Amphiaraus' whole aristeia takes place on a much shorter scale, beginning with Statius' pointing out his prominence in the action at *Theb.* 7.690, and ending some 133 lines later at the end of Book 7 with his descent into the underworld, which is then continued into the next book. Moreover, the sections which provide the greatest level of detail within this aristeia are in fact very brief in coverage: thus one hears of a series of ten victims at 7.711–22,[14] followed by five more victims at 7.755–9.[15] Even more general scenes of fighting during this episode do not take up such a great deal of space: Statius devotes nineteen lines to introducing the episode at 7.690–708, before describing in three lines how Amphiaraus is slaying an *innumeram plebem*, a "countless multitude" to his own shade (709–11), before the ten victims I have mentioned above. Hypseus then kills Amphiaraus' charioteer, when the god seizes control of the chariot at 737; after the set of five victims at 755–9, there is then a passage of eleven lines (760–70) describing Amphiaraus' slaughter of the Thebans in general terms, and the rest of the book is then taken up with Apollo's farewell to Amphiaraus and his descent into the underworld. General descriptions of the aristeia of Amphiaraus thus take up a total of 14 lines, while the slaughter of individuals occupies only a total of 17 lines. From this we can see that actual combat involving individuals is perhaps less present in *Thebaid* than one might initially expect. I will return to this issue of coverage in the war in Book 12 later on in this paper.

The absence of much fighting involving individuals is especially striking in view of the prominence of individual exploits in the story

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[14] Smolenaars 1994, 336 suggests that these kills may be an imitation of *Il.* 5.144–65.

[15] Smolenaars 1994, 359 compares Ov. *Met.* 5.1–235.

of the Seven against Thebes: one thinks of the Seven on the Argive side, and figures such as Eteocles, Creon, Menoeceus, Hypseus, and Haemon on the Theban side. Yet the puzzle remains that, although there are aristeiae attached to most of these characters, there are in fact few scenes involving individual combat. It may be useful here to consider how Lucan had already raised the issue of individual combat in epic, precisely because his subject matter was a civil war involving historical conflicts between substantial Roman armies.[16] Of course, Lucan does include examples of individual combats, such as the death-scene for Domitius Ahenobarbus at Pharsalus strongly modelled on Hector's dying moments in *Iliad* 22 (Luc. 7.599–616). However, in the immediate sequel to Domitius' Homeric demise, Lucan explicitly declines to talk about individual deaths in the battle:[17]

> inpendisse pudet lacrimas in funere mundi
> mortibus innumeris, ac singula fata sequentem
> quaerere letiferum per cuius uiscera uolnus
> exierit, quis fusa solo uitalia calcet,
> ore quis aduerso demissum faucibus ensem
> expulerit moriens anima, quis corruat ictus,
> quis steterit dum membra cadunt, qui pectore tela
> transmittant aut quos campis adfixerit hasta,
> quis cruor emissis perruperit aera uenis
> inque hostis cadat arma sui, quis pectora fratris
> caedat et, ut notum possit spoliare cadauer,
> abscisum longe mittat caput, ora parentis
> quis laceret nimiaque probet spectantibus ira
> quem iugulat non esse patrem. mors nulla querella
> digna sua est, nullosque hominum lugere uacamus.
> non istas habuit pugnae Pharsalia partes
> quas aliae clades: illic per fata uirorum,
> per populos hic Roma perit; quod militis illic,
> mors hic gentis erat:
>
> (Luc. 7.617–35)

> It is shameful at the funeral of the world to expend tears on innumerable deaths, and searching after the deaths of individuals to ask through whose vitals the death-dealing wound passed through, who trod on their innards poured out on the ground, who as he died with hostile gaze drove out with his breath the sword that had been driven through his throat, who collapsed when he had been hit, who remained standing

[16] For a useful discussions of Statius and Lucan, see Micozzi 1999 and 2004.
[17] On this passage, see e.g. Leigh 1997, 78; Radicke 2004, 420.

> while his limbs fell, who permits weapons to pass through his chest and who were fixed to the battlefield with a spear, whose blood broke through the air as his veins were emptied, and fell on the weapons of his enemy, or who struck the breast of a brother, and, so that he could despoil a corpse that he knew, cast the severed head far away, who mutilated the face of a parent, and proves to those who are watching with too much anger that the person whose throat he cuts is not his father. No death is worthy of its own lament, we have the leisure to lament for no men. Pharsalia did not have those divisions of battles which other slaughters have: there Rome perished through the fates of men, here through peoples; what was the death of a soldier there was here the death of a nation ...

Lucan is discussing here how to write of Roman defeat, with the end of the passage comparing Pharsalus with other unnamed defeats for the Romans. However, by a kind of *praeteritio*, Lucan is also declining to describe the kinds of death which can be found in epic poetry, whilst at the same time giving examples of such slayings. Now of course Lucan's own writing does include instances of individual deaths elsewhere (one thinks for instance of the various extraordinary deaths of individuals described in the sea-battle in Luc. 3.509–762).[18] At the same time, however, Lucan's refusal to speak of individual deaths in narrating the battle of Pharsalus may be felt both to evoke the scale of the casualties, but also to suggest that the kind of battle narrative offered by epic which concentrates on individuals is not equal to such a situation (cf. 7.634–5 *quod militis illic / mors hic gentis erat*, "what was the death of a soldier there was here the death of a nation").

The question then arises: to what extent do Lucan's successors in epic respond to this? The reaction of Silius is striking: Silius' battle scenes such as Cannae and Zama are replete with the deaths of individuals; the historical content does not seem to stop Silius from providing deaths of individuals of a kind which go back to Homeric epic: thus we find Hannibal, for example, killing Crista and his six sons at Sil. 10.92–169 in a manner which obviously recalls the exploits of heroes in Homer. Statius' subject, however, was of course different from those of Lucan and Silius in that it was not historical epic, and was indeed already sanctified as a story of the achievements of heroes. However, Lucan's critique of conventional epic battle narrative might

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[18] On the violent deaths of individuals in Lucan, see e.g. Bartsch 1997, 15–7.

be felt to be significant even in the *Thebaid*. Though the deaths of individuals are still there with their own particular woundings, these episodes, as we have seen, are often foreshortened. On the other hand, as I have discussed elsewhere, Hypsipyle's insistence on narrating the fates of her own family during the night of killing of the Lemnian men at *Theb*. 5.218–9 might seem to be a reversal of Lucan's position, since Hypsipyle states her intention to concentrate on the individual members of her family:[19]

> non ego nunc uulgi quamquam crudelia pandam
> funera, sed propria luctus de stirpe recordor

> I will not now set out the deaths of the crowd, cruel though they were, but I recall griefs from my own family

Nevertheless, one can note a passage where Statius shows two methods of describing a kind of aristeia whilst both adhering to and also going against Lucan's point about the need not to give the deaths of individuals. The passage in question occurs during the night raid against the Thebans in Book 10.

Firstly Statius presents the achievements of Thiodamas:

> quis numeret caedes, aut nomine turbam
> exanimem signare queat? subit ordine nullo
> tergaque pectoraque et galeis inclusa relinquit
> murmura permiscetque uagos in sanguine manes:
> hunc temere explicitum stratis, hunc sero remissis
> gressibus inlapsum clipeo et male tela tenentem,
> coetibus hos mediis uina inter et arma iacentes,
> adclines clipeis alios, ut quemque ligatum
> infelix tellure sopor supremaque nubes
> obruerat.
>
> (*Theb*. 10.273–82)

> Who might count the slaughter, or be able to mark out the lifeless crowd with names? In no sequence he comes upon backs and breasts and leaves murmurs shut in helmets and mingles wandering ghosts in blood: this one rashly laid out on his bedding, this one slipping on his shield, too late, with uncontrolled steps and holding his weapons without success, these in the middle of the throng as they lay amid wine and weapons, others leaning on their shields, as unlucky sleep and the final darkness had overwhelmed each of them and tied them to the ground.

[19] See Gibson 2004, 160.

What is striking here is how the poet at first treats the nocturnal killings without mentioning the names of those involved (in keeping with his statement on the difficulties of matching names to the dead): we can contrast this with Virgil, who in the night raid in Book 9 does give the names of most of the victims of Nisus and Euryalus, so that it is as if Statius is going back to the Homeric pattern, where we hear in the Doloneia of the specific death only of Rhesus (who is referred to as the king at the actual moment of being killed, *Il.* 10.494–7). In part the Homeric pattern may seem a more realistic design for narrative, seen from the point of view of the killers (who might not know the names of their victims). Then, however, Statius gives the other method for a night killing (*Theb.* 10.296–325), by describing the victims of Agylleus and Actor, and then giving names of individuals in the Virgilian fashion, Ialmenus the player of the *cithara* (*Theb.* 10.304–10), and other named victims, rounded off with a final victim of Thiodamas, as a means of uniting what are effectively simultaneous strands of narration, before proceeding to the continuation of the narrative with the approach of dawn and the withdrawal of all of the Argives apart from Hopleus and Dymas from the night action.

Statius' two approaches to night narration in Book 10, first from the point of view of the killers, and then from that of the victims, who are therefore named, thus presents battle from the perspective of the two sides. Similarly, in Book 12, when describing the remarkably short war between Creon and Theseus, Statius sets a passage avoiding individual details alongside an account of fighting which provides precisely such information. After narrating the rather feeble preparations of the Thebans for yet another war (*Theb.* 12.721–5), Statius gives an account of the flight of the Thebans. This effects a subtle compression of the Homeric pattern of two sides meeting in combat until the point when one side flees (*phobos* is a term used to denote this in the work of Homeric scholars):[20] as soon as Theseus is seen by his enemies, there is an instant rout on the Theban side, marked by the simile where Theseus is compared to Mars warring in Thrace (12.733–5). In keeping perhaps with a poem which has come close to exhausting the possibilities of warfare in its narration, Theseus does not even deign to fight against the fleeing Thebans:

[20] For the *phobos*, see e.g. Willcock 1983, 87–8; van Wees 1997.

> taedet fugientibus uti
> Thesea, nec facilem dignatur dextra cruorem.
> cetera plebeio desaeuit sanguine uirtus:
> sic iuuat exanimis proiectaque praeda canesque
> degeneresque lupos, magnos alit ira leones.
>
> (*Theb.* 12.736–40)

> It is wearisome for Theseus to avail himself of his fleeing enemy, nor does his right hand deem such easy bloodshed worthy. The rest of the men on his side rage in the blood of the crowd: so a lifeless prey, spread out, is a delight to dogs and degenerate wolves, but anger is what nourishes great lions.

Here, Theseus does not deign to pursue his foes, a striking contrast to the tendency of heroes in epic to pursue those in flight, and Statius also refrains from naming Theseus' colleagues who do go after the enemy, simply referring to them with the striking periphrasis *cetera uirtus*. But, once again, Statius suggests an alternative way of conducting battle narrative, only to go on to give us a perfunctory taste of the traditional mode as well. Thus, at 12.741–51 there is a brief set of individuals killed by Theseus, including three brothers, a last glance at the fraternal theme, before, interestingly, Theseus fails to kill Haemon. There is then a final duel, obviously echoing the end of the *Aeneid* as well as the duel of Polynices and Eteocles, as scholars have pointed out,[21] but even more perfunctory. Again we see the Statian technique of foreshortening applied here, since the only acts of combat are two casts of spears, one each from Theseus and Creon, who conveniently receives a fatal wound. Contrast the more extensive combat of Hector and Achilles in *Iliad* 22, and that of Aeneas and Turnus in *Aeneid* 12, where Virgil gives an elaborate account of the heroes clashing in single combat. Before Aeneas' fatal throw against Turnus, incidents take place such as the breaking of Turnus' sword, Aeneas' spear becoming stuck in the olive tree, and Turnus' cast of a stone at Aeneas. Moreover, Turnus is famously *not* killed by Aeneas' spear, and Aeneas finishes him and the poem with a final sword-blow at the end.[22] Statius, however, cuts to the chase by having Theseus throw his first spear at Creon and at the same time invoke the language of sacrifice used by Aeneas at the end of the *Aeneid* when he

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[21] See e.g. Hardie 1997, 152–3; Pollmann 2004, 26–7; McNelis 2007, 161–3.

[22] Hardie 1997, 145–8 usefully analyses the importance of delay in the closing phases of the *Aeneid*.

uses his sword to finish off the action (*Theb*. 12.771–8; cf. *A*. 12.949–50).[23] The final combat of the *Thebaid* illustrates the kind of desire to compress material which we have already seen elsewhere.

Days and nights

I wish now to consider Statius' use of an important structural feature of martial epic, the onset of daylight, and its relation to book-divisions. Descriptions of the beginning of day of course go back to Homer, even though Homeric scholars are generally in agreement that the divisions of the *Iliad* into books probably go no further back than the fourth century BC at the earliest.[24] In the case of Statius, the beginning of day often falls at points which are not the outset of battle: thus, in Book 7 the description of dawn on the first day of the fighting introduces not the beginning of the war, but instead the arrival of Jocasta among the Argives (*Theb*. 7.470–88).[25] In Book 8, the day that had included Amphiaraus' descent into the underworld is not brought to a close until 8.161. The night that follows then includes the mourning for Amphiaraus and celebrations in Thebes, and a meeting of Adrastus' council which appoints Thiodamas to replace Amphiaraus (8.271–93); interestingly, this council might be felt to recall such nocturnal meetings as those convoked by Agamemnon at the start of *Iliad* 2 and 10, but Statius shows a desire to strike out on his own by placing this meeting just before dawn. The next day begins with the poet declining to have a conventional scene of dawn at all: the opening of day is marked by a seamless transition to the opening of battle with the two sides going out to fight (*Theb*. 8.342–70), before the invocation to Calliope and Apollo at 8.373–4. Here one might have in mind the opening of day in, for example, *Iliad* 11, one of the middle days of the fighting in the *Iliad*, but whereas in *Iliad* 11 the opening of battle is marked out by Zeus sending Eris (Strife) to the ships of the Achaeans (*Il*. 11.3), in Statius Tisiphone sets events in motion from the summit of Teumesus (*Theb*. 8.344–7), while Bellona beats on the gates (8.348–9). Not only does Statius not give the standard opening

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[23] Hardie 1993, 46.

[24] For a convenient discussion of Homeric book-divisions in the *Iliad*, see Taplin 1992, 285–93.

[25] On Jocasta's visit to the Argive camp, see Ganiban 2007, 110–2; McNelis 2007, 122 n. 86.

of a day according to the Homeric model, but he also replaces the involvement of Zeus at the beginning of a day's fighting with that of Tisiphone.

The day that begins at this point in Book 8 then runs on until the end of Book 9, with the death of Parthenopaeus. Not until the very beginning of Book 10, however, does Statius actually describe nightfall, which thus begins strikingly with the onset of the night that includes the raid made by Thiodamas and others on the Argive side against the Thebans. As in Book 8, Statius again adopts a blurred distinction between night and the next day, with three indications of the nearness of dawn during the narration of the night's events (*Theb.* 10.326–7, 10.381–3, 10.390), but there is no direct depiction of dawn, whose arrival has to be inferred from Amphion's detection of the slaughter of Thebans at 10.467–73. Once again there is no set piece account of daybreak and the night merges into the next day's fighting with Amphion's Thebans fleeing in terror back to the city.[26]

This next day continues until the onset of night at the end of Book 11, and thus includes the deaths of Menoeceus and Capaneus, the conflict of Polynices and Eteocles, the accession of Creon, and his decision to banish Oedipus from the city. Here Statius does end a book with the onset of night, which might be felt to be a more conventional practice (cf. e.g. *Iliad* 7, which ends with the Achaean host taking the gift of sleep, or *Iliad* 8, which closes with the Trojans on the plain waiting for dawn), but even here we see the poet using the forms of day and night to a particular purpose: there is especial point to the arrival of this night, since it allows the remnants of the Argive army to retire under cover of darkness:[27]

> interea pulsi uallum exitiale Pelasgi
> destituunt furto; nulli sua signa suusque
> ductor: eunt taciti passim et pro funere pulchro

[26] One may contrast Virgil in *Aeneid* 9, who similarly provides indications of the imminence of dawn during the night action of Nisus and Euryalus (as at *A.* 9.355, *nam lux inimica propinquat*, "for hostile daylight is approaching"), but also has a set-piece depiction of Aurora bringing on the dawn at *A.* 9.459–60, marking out in Iliadic fashion the divide between one day and night and the start of the next.

[27] For the literary commonplace of battle being ended by nightfall, see e.g. Liv. 7.33.15 with Oakley 1998, 330–1, who notes examples in historiography where night ends a battle and reveals which side has won.

> dedecorem amplexi uitam reditusque pudendos.
> nox fauet et grata profugos amplectitur umbra.
>
> (*Theb*. 11.757–61)

> Meanwhile the beaten Pelasgi abandon their doomed rampart by stealth; none of them have their own standards or their own leader: they go silently all over the place and they embrace a disgraceful life and shameful returns home instead of a noble death. Night favours them and enfolds the fugitives with welcome shade.

Philip Hardie (1997, 152) has pointed to how the end of Book 11 evokes the end of the *Aeneid*, but the point can also be made here that at a stroke Statius uses the device of temporary epic closure with the onset of night in a way which completely undermines the heroic status of the Argive host, who just slip away. The epic convention of night here is also the night of oblivion, as the living Argives become nameless henceforth; what we do not get is the motif of the onset of heroic death as night; instead a disgraced life is one that is lived in shadow. The only instance of daybreak leading directly to combat comes in Book 12, when the onset of dawn leads to Theseus heading off to battle against the Thebans. Even here, however, Statius varies the convention, describing the dawn not from the perspective of the overall narrator, but from that of Theseus:

> Atticus at contra, iubar ut clarescere ruptis
> nubibus et solem primis aspexit in armis,
> desilit in campum ...
>
> (*Theb*. 12.709–11)

> But the Athenian, on the other hand, when he saw the light grow clear as the clouds broke up, and saw the sunlight on tips of the weapons, leapt down into the field ...

We can see, then, that Statius adopts in the battle narratives of the *Thebaid* the epic tradition of structuring by means of days and nights, but with an original approach: there are even two examples, as we have seen, where the conventional strong divide between the action of a night and the day that follows is in fact elided.

Fading in and out

A separate aspect of Statius' technique is his willingness to introduce material which takes away the audience from scenes of battle and the

environs occupied by the two sides. Now of course, some aspects of this technique are already present in Homer, such as similes, which I shall deal with later, and the inclusion of scenes set in the divine sphere, such as those set on Olympus, or the visit of Thetis to Hephaestus in *Iliad* 18. However it is worth noticing how Statius is willing to shift the scene elsewhere on the mortal level as well, even during the midst of battle. The most striking instance of this is in Book 9 after the death of Hippomedon, when Statius moves the focus to the mother of Parthenopaeus, Atalanta. And while Virgil in *Aeneid* 9, after the death of Nisus and Euryalus, reported the news being conveyed to the mother of Euryalus and her reactions (*A*. 9.473–502), we should remember here that Euryalus' mother is in the camp of the Trojans (interesting called *urbem* in *A*. 9.473), as indicated by the fact that Euryalus, before the night raid takes place, confesses himself unwilling to burden her with the news of his involvement. While in Virgil there is not really a significant shift of locale, Statius' treatment of Atalanta, however, represents something quite different: we are actually confronted by an instance of the motif of the parent left behind, as the poet takes us from the action on the battlefield (Hippomedon has just been killed), to describe the events of the night before the battle currently in progress. Thus as well as providing a geographical shift, with the scene moving from Thebes to Arcadia, there is also a temporal shift in the narrative as well, as we move back from the midst of battle to a description of Atalanta's dream. Statius conveys a sense of the experience of a parent far from war, a motif often alluded in the *Iliad*, and often indeed referred to in the case of Peleus, the father of Achilles, but never actually shown: Peleus' loneliness in Phthia is spoken of by the characters, but he never appears directly in the poem. Statius provides an effective transition back to the action, because Atalanta's prayer to Diana is then followed by the goddess' decision to involve herself in at least assisting the hero for a while before his death. A briefer example of something similar also occurs in Book 9, with the death of Crenaeus, which takes his mother, the nymph Ismenis, away from the scene of the fighting down the river Ismenos almost to the sea (*Theb*. 9.370–1) where she finally is able to recover her son's body.

Similes

I turn now to the similes used by Statius in the course of the poem. Clearly, there are examples which reflect the practice of Homer and Virgil, with heroes being compared to wild animals, for example; thus Haemon is compared to a boar that has been wounded once, when he withdraws from confrontation with Tydeus in *Theb*. 8.532–5. However, Statius also employs another type of simile, where the situation of the battle is envisaged in counterfactual and slightly different terms, but without the characteristic movement whereby epic similes take the audience away from the events to another context. Let me give an illustration of what I mean by this.

At *Theb*. 8.390–4, we hear of how, in the fury of battle, even the horses rage against their enemies:

> quid mirum caluisse uiros? flammantur in hostem
> cornipedes niueoque rigant sola putria nimbo,
> corpora ceu mixti dominis irasque sedentum
> induerint: sic frena terunt, sic proelia poscunt
> hinnitu tolluntque armos equitesque supinant.

> What reason to wonder that men grew hot with rage? The horses are inflamed against the enemy, and soak the crumbling ground with a snowy cloud, as if their bodies were mingled with their masters and they had assumed the anger of their riders: so do they wear out the bridle, so do they demand battle with their neighing, and raise their shoulders and throw their horsemen backwards.

Here one might well compare this simile with the imagery of centaurs used elsewhere in Statian similes (cf. *Theb*. 7.638–9 and 9.220–2). But whereas these other instances compare horse and rider to something different, in this passage, Statius' material for the simile is its own context, and the horses are in fact being compared to themselves in a hypothetical situation where they become mingled with their masters.[28] This is therefore not a simile of the type which takes the audience away from the context of the main narration. There are of course parallels in earlier epic, as we shall see, but Statius' poem is peculiarly rich in such similes. At the opening of book 9, there are two examples.

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[28] For the idea of the horse being like its rider, perhaps compare the horse in the equestrian statue of Domitian at *Silv*. 1.1.46–7, *at sonipes habitus animosque imitatus equestres / acrius attollit uultus cursumque minatur*, "but the horse, imitating the bearing and spirit of its rider, raises its head more keenly and threatens a charge".

First of all, when the Thebans are stirred to respond to Tydeus' cannibalism, the poet compares their reaction to the way they would act if their ancestral graves were violated (*Theb*. 9.10–1). And at 9.44–5, when Polynices is grieving for Tydeus, it is as if he is affected by 1000 wounds: again the simile does not take the focus of attention away from Polynices, but envisages him in a hypothetical situation.[29] Book 10 offers another striking example, where sleeping Thebans prior to the night raid led by Thiodamas are said to look as if they are already dead (10.265–6), in what is obviously an anticipation of what is about to happen. The opposite effect is also produced in the brief counterfactual simile at 10.379 where the dead Parthenopaeus and Tydeus are said to be carried by Dymas and Hopleus as if they were actually alive, illustrating the depth of their emotion for their dead commanders. At 10.854–5, there is something similar, when Capaneus in his ascent of the walls of Thebes is said to be *ceu suprema lues urbi facibusque cruentis / aequatura solo turres Bellona subiret*, "as if he were the final doom for the city, and as if Bellona, about to raze the towers to the ground, were coming with bloody torches", a simile which draws attention to the fact that Capaneus' assault will not in fact succeed. The simile perhaps also owes something to two related similes in Virgil and Homer which provide rare instance of those poets using counterfactual similes, *Iliad* 22.410–1 where lamentation for Hector is compared to the grief that would be manifested if Troy were falling, and *Aeneid* 4.669–71, where reaction to Dido's death is likened to the lamentation that would arise if Carthage or Tyre were sacked. We can note too, with Smolenaars, that Statius in fact had already reused this material in Book 7, in what might be called a near-simile, at 7.599–603:[30]

> templa putes urbemque rapi facibusque nefandis
> Sidonios ardere lares, sic clamor apertis
> exoritur muris; mallent cunabula magni
> Herculis aut Semeles thalamum aut penetrale ruisse
> Harmoniae.

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[29] For an example within direct speech, note Polynices on Tydeus at *Theb*. 9.67 *ceu tibimet sceptra et proprios laturus honores*; where Dewar 1991, 71 compares 2.477 *ipsi ceu regna negentur*.

[30] Smolenaars 1994, 269. For a Silian counterfactual example, note Sil. 10.172 where Paulus is said to be fighting *ceu uictor*.

> You would think that temples and the city were being seized and that the Sidonian homes were burning with wicked torches, such a shout arises when the gates of the walls are thrown open; they would rather that the cradle of Hercules or the bedroom of Semele or the chamber of Harmonia had collapsed.

Here *Sidonios*, “Theban” but also “Phoenician” as a result of the Thebans’ origins in Phoenicia, is probably to be seen as an acknowledgement of Virgil’s simile of Tyre or Carthage. The opening of Book 11 affords another striking simile: at lines 7–8, Jove is congratulated by the other gods as if he had been fighting his giant opponents at Phlegra or at Etna: again the god is virtually compared to himself, but in a different situation; and the result is surely to enhance our sense of the opposition provided by Capaneus.[31]

Statius’ employment of this type of simile is an important feature of his approach to battle narrative. Arguably, this kind of simile actually pulls in the opposite direction to conventional epic similes which take the audience away from the events being described, often through some kind of analogy with the natural world. As the Homeric simile used of the Trojans’ grief at Hector’s death shows, comparison of something with something very similar is actually a device of intensification, rather than a means of providing relief, and thus in Statius the simile where the horses are compared to what they would be like if mingled with their masters amplifies and raises the tone to a higher emotional pitch, just as Polynices’ pain at the death of Tydeus in book 9 is compared to the effects of a thousand wounds on him. Counterfactual similes in the battle narrative are thus one means for Statius to intensify the material he is covering, and the idea that similes are a means for providing relief from the main narrative will not work for these.

[31] There are also examples of such counterfactual similes elsewhere in the poem, in non-combat scenes: a memorable instance is the brief simile at the end of Book 11, where Oedipus’ enraged facial reaction to Creon’s decree that he be banished is compared to what it would have been if his eyes had been still intact (*Theb.* 11.673–4). On Capaneus, see e.g. Criado 2000, 107–10; McNelis 2007, 140–5; Ganiban 2007, 145–8.

Battle narrative and anachronisms

I wish to turn now to another issue, the intrusion of anachronistic elements into the presentation of battle. Statius does, indeed, incorporate references which suggest events after the era of Thebes, as with the simile referring to mining in Spain at *Theb*. 6.880–5, or the reference to succession to the Persian throne at 8.286–93; note too the reference to spices offered at the funeral of Opheltes in *Thebaid* 6 (6.59–61; 209–10) which has more in common with the kind of thing described by Statius in his account of funerals in the *Silvae* than with, say, the funeral of Patroclus in the *Iliad*.[32] In battle scenes, one of the techniques used by Statius is to evoke methods of combat which, if not necessarily contemporary, nevertheless seem somewhat at odds with the supposed setting of the epic in the heroic age. Now this is not something particular to Statius:[33] Virgil for instance uses the word *legio* to refer to contingents fighting in the *Aeneid* (e.g. *legio Aeneadum*, *A*. 10.120)[34], and the word has a history in epic which goes back to Naevius, and also Ennius, where the word is used on a number of occasions, even denoting the Carthaginian forces at *Ann*. 292 Sk. However, there is surely something of a difference between Virgil applying the word to Italian or Trojan contingents who are proto-Romans, and Statius using the term, as he does at *Theb*. 4.647, of the Argive host, or at 10.195 *Aonidum legio*, "the host of the Aonians", a clever echo of Virgil's use of *legio* with *Aeneadum* and indeed *Ausonidum* (*A*. 12.121), used of the Thebans sleeping before the night attack against them: the word is as pointedly Italian in a Greek setting as the word *phalanx* is intrusively Greek in Latin epic. Valerius Flaccus too uses *legio*, to describe the Argonauts (7.573), and even a contingent of Scythians at V.Fl. 6.48 *Bisaltae legio ductorque Colaxes*, "the legion of the Bisaltae and their leader Colaxes", and the Drangaeans at 6.507–8. One might argue that the use of the word is merely conventional, but Valerius' extraordinary simile at 6.402–6, where the

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32 For Statius' use of spices, see e.g. van Dam 1984, 148–51; Gibson 2006a, 152–6.

33 An important study of 'anachronisms' in Virgil which is still relevant here is Sandbach 1965–6, which includes remarks on Statius as well (34–5). See also (on Virgil) Horsfall 2003, 352 and 412 on *A*. 11.616 and 11.770 for further discussion and references.

34 Harrison 1991, 92 argues that the sense here is an original one of 'muster' or 'levy'.

Colchian war is compared to Tisiphone sending Roman legions to civil war, *Romanas ueluti saeuissima cum legiones / Tisiphone regesque mouet* (6.402–3), "just as when Tisiphone at her most savage stirs up Roman legions and monarchs" should warn us against seeing such words as necessarily insignificant.[35] We can note, too, the way in which Statius uses words such as *signifer* at *Theb.* 10.555, suggesting for a moment the legionary standard-bearer, as the word is found used in Lucan and Silius, and perhaps echoing too the even more Roman use of the word at Sen. *Phoen.* 390.[36]

On several occasions, when it comes to weaponry and equipment, we can see Statius taking over material which would have been entirely appropriate in the contexts of some of his epic predecessors who had written about Rome (I include Virgil here), but which in Statius can only add an anachronistic undercurrent.[37] This practice is of course not confined to Statius. One can note for instance the appearance of the *phalarica*, an automated missile weapon in *Aeneid* 9.705, which is attested in Ennius (*Ann.* 557 Sk.), and, as Skutsch notes, seems to have been used in the second Punic War at the siege of Saguntum, being mentioned subsequently by both Livy and Silius:[38] what is arguably historically accurate in Ennius and Silius might be felt to be anachronistic in the pre-Roman context of the *Aeneid*. In Statius there is rather more of this kind of thing. Consider the use of the sling as a weapon. In the *Iliad* it is found at 13.599–600, while in the *Aeneid* it is used by Mezentius at 9.586, and appears as one of the weapons of the *legio agrestis* from the region of Praeneste at 7.686. We also find various authors referring to the sling as a weapon of the inhabitants of the Balearic isles (e.g. Verg. *G.* 1.309), sometimes in similes (e.g. Ov. *Met.* 2.727–8, 4.709–10), while Balearic slingers not surprisingly appear in the narratives of Lucan and Silius (Luc. 1.229, Sil. 3.365) dealing with historical conflicts, just as they can be found in prose authors such as Polybius or Caesar (see e.g. Plb. 3.33.11, Caes. *BG* 2.7). When Statius, however, mentions the Balearic sling at

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35 Cf. McNelis 2007, 3–4.

36 Sen. *Phoen.* 390 *aquilaque pugnam signifer mota uocat.*

37 For a recent treatment of anachronistic elements in the apparatus of siege-warfare found in Virgil, see Rossi 2004, 180–8, especially 187 where she argues that anachronisms can "generate an effect of narrative polychrony".

38 Skutsch 1985, 702–3.

Theb. 10.857,[39] not in a simile, but in his account of how the Thebans resisted Capaneus' ascent of the walls, there is clearly something different going on. One could dismiss this as the poet simply taking over something mentioned in his predecessors without regard for the historical oddity of supposing that the inhabitants of Thebes in the generation before the Trojan war were in a position to use the Balearic sling, but this is, I think, to miss the point: another Statian strategy for amplifying the significance of his war is to evoke historical combats, which had after all been on the grander scale.

And why should the poet not draw on the resources of historiography? Poetry and historiography had been in conflict from as early as Thucydides' claim that the Trojan war was not on the same scale as more recent conflicts (Thuc. 1.10.3). One way for epic poets to enhance their own work was to take on material from historiography. This could take place in various forms, both in terms of historiographical method, as Woodman's discusion of how Virgil alludes to various episodes from early Livy shows,[40] or in terms of actual content, as Andreola Rossi's book on Virgil's adaptation in the *Aeneid* of historiographical topoi such as the fall of a city shows.[41] In the case of Statius, and to some extent Valerius Flaccus, both poets might be said to be alive to the potential offered by Rome's history of conflicts, particularly in later periods. How else explain, for instance, the appearance of the scythed chariot in both poets? In Statius, this type of chariot is used by Amphiaraus at 7.712 and Antheus at 10.544–51. The fate of Antheus, who ends up being dragged along, suggests at the very least an appreciation on the part of Statius of how dangerous and indeed useless scythed chariots were in practice, something also reflected in Valerius' longer episode of scythed chariots used by Ariasmenus during the Colchian war (V.Fl. 6.386–426), where the chariots end up turning on their own allies and bringing Ariasmenus himself to a messy end. In historical terms, the scythed chariot should not be seen as a feature of contemporary warfare[42], but as something which

[39] Other instances of the sling in the *Thebaid* are found at 4.66, 7.338, 8.416.

[40] Woodman 1989.

[41] Rossi 2004; on the sacking of cities, cf. Ziolkowski 1993. See also Ash 2002; Horsfall 2003, xiv–xv and 471–2 on Virgil and historiography.

[42] *SHA Alexander Severus* 55 and 56 need not be taken seriously as evidence of the scythed chariot's survival; it is more likely that the writer is simply taking the old tradition of Persian scythed chariots and associating the much later Sasanians with them. Note too Luc. 1.426, a reference to the Belgae using the *couinnus*, a kind of war

went back to the traditions of Alexander's wars against the Persians (thus we find them mentioned in Q. Curtius, for instance)[43], or Rome's wars against Hellenistic monarchies. Valerius' treatment is very similar indeed to the account of the fiasco with Antiochus III's scythed chariots at the battle of Magnesia as reported by Liv. 37.41.[44] An interest in evoking the grandeur of historical combat would also explain Statius' mention of the Macedonian *sarisa* in *Theb.* 7.269; the term is used in Lucan twice (8.298 and 10.47), but on both occasions it is clearly with reference to Macedonians. In Statius' passage, *fraxineas Macetum uibrant de more sarisas*, "they brandish pikes of ash after the manner of the Macedonians", there is a brilliant conflation: Statius recalls the age-old spears of ash that we find used in Homer, as Smolenaars notes,[45] but he also evokes the much later set-piece grandeur of the Macedonian phalanx of the age of Alexander and of the Hellenistic kingdoms at the same time.

Similarly, we find the apparatus of siege weapons and the like finding its way into the *Thebaid*. Thus Statius' poem includes siege engines such as the *tormentum*. The *tormentum* appears in the historical epics of Lucan and Silius,[46] and in Virgil the word appears twice, but on both occasions in a simile (*A.* 11.616, 12.921–2)[47]. Statius, however, has two references to *tormenta*: the first at *Theb.* 9.146, where Hippomedon would have been unaffected by *tormenta*, might be felt to be comparable to the word's appearance in Virgil, but at 10.859 *tormenta* occur in the main narrative, when they are used by the citizens of Thebes in an attempt to dislodge Capaneus, in the same passage where the Balearic sling is mentioned. Similarly, the iron-topped

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chariot, said to be scythed at Mela 3.52 and also at Sil. 17.417 (in a simile). The presence of *couinni* is also noted by Tac. *Ag.* 35.3 and 36.3 (a reference to their flight) at the battle of Mons Graupius in AD 84. Mart. 12.24.1 refers to their use in Rome as a means of carriage.

[43] See e.g. the account of Darius' order of battle at Curt. 4.12.

[44] As noted by Wijsman 2000, 157.

[45] Smolenaars 1994, 134.

[46] Luc. 3.480, 3.716; Sil. 1.475, 6.214, 6.279, 9.560.

[47] See further Horsfall 2003, 352 on the *tormentum* at Verg. *A.* 11.616. Cf. Ov. *Met.* 3.549–50 where Pentheus wishes that Thebes was being destroyed by men and *tormenta* (in the context of denouncing the religion of Dionysus), 9.218 (Hercules and Lichas) *mittit in Euboicas tormento fortius undas*, 14.183–4 (Macareus on the stones thrown by the Cyclops being *ueluti tormenti uiribus acta*, 183). On Roman imperial artillery see Marsden 1969, 174–98, who notes (188 n. 5) that *tormentum* is in fact a vague term for a siege-engine, which tends to occur more in less technical writers.

tower on which the trumpeter Enyeus stands at *Theb.* 11.49 owes more to historical warfare than it does to the kind of fighting described in Homer.[48]

Conclusion

These are just a few examples, but they show how content of the kind Statius would have found in the historical narratives of poets such as Lucan and possibly Silius (if Statius had heard any recitations) plays its part in the mythological battle narrative of the *Thebaid*.[49] Historical epics such as Lucan's poem were able to draw on historiographers' claims for the grandeur of their subjects; hence Lucan's insistence in *BC* 7 on troping the civil war as a war involving the whole world (see e.g. Luc. 7.362–4, 617). Similarly, in Silius too, we find the poet at the opening of the poem emphasising the grandeur and danger of the Second Punic War, just as Livy (21.1) before him had, Silius' remarks that the victors came closer to disaster (Sil. 1.13–14) being a clear echo of Livy. Thus it should be no surprise to see Statius conjuring up historical modes of warfare in a poem on a mythical heroic subject: as well as the interest raised by evoking more recent times, references to weaponry such as scythed chariots and siege artillery adds to the sense that we are not simply in a pre-*Iliadic* and primitive world of warfare, but in something altogether grander.

And this, I think, is the key to understanding some of Statius' other approaches to the presentation of warfare as well. In a war so obviously involving individuals, single combats of the traditional epic variety have to be present. Nevertheless, I hope that I have shown how Statius often circumscribes such passages. Statius could not simply copy the exact techniques of Homer and Virgil. But while there is some compression in terms of coverage, there is much other material which serves to heighten the portrayal of battle. Thus Statius includes examples of similes which amplify the intensity of the situation in which they arise, such as the simile of the horses taking on their master's rage, rather than direct the audience away to something else.

[48] Cf. Rossi 2004, 182–3, and 186 on the connections between *turres* in Virgilian narrative and in historiographical writing; see also Sandbach 1965–6, 33.

[49] For useful observations on the chronological interrelationship of Statius and Silius, see e.g. Dewar 1991, xxxi, Smolenaars 1994, xvii–xviii.

Similarly, we find Statius offering his own response to the conventional epic divisions of time into days and night, with two occasions where day and night seem to merge; this might be felt to be something different from the straightforward segmentation of epic, and thus more in keeping with an evocation of at least a hint of historical warfare. And so, while it is true that much of the combat in the poem is in keeping with the traditions of epic, the poem also contains elements which confer on Statius' narrative the grandeur of war in historiographical treatments.

War is, of course, a competitive business, but so are accounts of war, a point made as early as the *Iliad* when Sthenelus reacts with irritation to Agamemnon's story of how Tydeus fought against the fifty Thebans:[50]

> "Ἀτρεΐδη μὴ ψεύδε' ἐπιστάμενος σάφα εἰπεῖν·
> ἡμεῖς τοι πατέρων μέγ' ἀμείνονες εὐχόμεθ' εἶναι·
> ἡμεῖς καὶ Θήβης ἕδος εἵλομεν ἑπταπύλοιο
> παυρότερον λαὸν ἀγαγόνθ' ὑπὸ τεῖχος ἄρειον,
> πειθόμενοι τεράεσσι θεῶν καὶ Ζηνὸς ἀρωγῇ·
> κεῖνοι δὲ σφετέρῃσιν ἀτασθαλίῃσιν ὄλοντο·
> τὼ μή μοι πατέρας ποθ' ὁμοίῃ ἔνθεο τιμῇ."
>
> (*Iliad* 4.404–10)

> "Son of Atreus, do not say things that are false when you know what is true. We claim we are better than our fathers. For we took the seat of seven-gated Thebes, both of us leading a smaller host against the martial wall, trusting in the portents of the gods and the help of Zeus. But they were destroyed by their own wickedness: therefore do not hold our fathers in the same honour."

Sthenelus subverts the usual tradition of respect for the achievements of the past by remarking that his generation were in fact better than the men who had fought and lost against Thebes. It would be no surprise if the *epic* presentation of war was not competitive also,[51] as it certainly is amongst historiographers. Epic poets such as Statius have to consider and respond to the tradition that precedes them, and the amplification of combat through some of the similes and the inclusion of elements from more recent historical warfare are just two elements

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[50] On Tydeus in Homer and Statius, see e.g. Vessey 1973, 141–7; Lovatt 2005, 194–7.

[51] For Statius' *Thebaid* as a competitive retelling of the Theban story, see Gibson 2004, 156.

of Statius' process of setting up his own epic alongside its competitors, whether recent or remote in time.

STATIUS AND THE GREEK TRAGEDIANS ON ATHENS, THEBES AND ROME

P. J. Heslin

The *Thebaid* of Statius ends with a pointed contrast between Athens and Thebes when the forces of Theseus and Creon meet in the final battle of the epic. A Roman reader might well have wondered which city his own was most like: fratricidal Thebes, wracked by civil war, or Athens, bringer of peace and cosmopolitan city of culture? This antithesis is, of course, framed from an Athenian standpoint, and the contrast with Thebes is particularly evocative of Athenian tragedy. As we will see, in the final book of the *Thebaid* the genre of tragedy epitomizes Athens in a specific, crucial way. This conception rests not merely on the plot of one play, although the *Suppliant Women* provides the basis for the action, and not just on the works of one playwright, in this case Euripides; Statius illustrates his conception of tragedy with examples from all three of the canonical playwrights, and particularly, since we are dealing with the house of Oedipus, from the work of Sophocles. This paper will argue that Statius emphasizes one particular aspect of tragedy, that distinctively Athenian genre, in order to turn Athens into both a positive and a negative paradigm for Rome.

It is well established that the final books of the *Thebaid* were heavily influenced by Euripides, particularly the *Phoenician Women* for the account of the assault on Thebes and Jocasta's attempt at mediation, and to the *Suppliant Women* for the story in the final book of the epic of how the women of Argos successfully petition Theseus to intervene and to stop Creon from preventing the burial of their kin.[1] In contrast, the influence of Sophocles has hardly been detected at all.[2] This seems a bit strange, given the fame, even in antiquity, of Sophocles' Theban plays, which treated parts of the same chain of events as

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[1] See Vessey 1973, index, s.v. "Euripides"; Vessey is keen to stress Statius' originality, and so tends in fact to highlight the ways in which he diverged from Euripides. See also Smolenaars 1994, 214–7 and 410–3.

[2] Vessey 1973, 69. The apparent absence of Sophoclean influence on Statius has been emphasized more recently by Holford-Strevens 2000a, 47f. and 2000b, 237.

Statius. As we will see, Statius in fact plays quite overtly on the fame of Sophocles' Antigone, and from this it should emerge that Statius at the very least expects his audience to be familiar with the Sophoclean narrative in general terms. We will begin by looking at a few passages from the end of the *Thebaid* where Statius seems to give some hints in the direction of Sophocles. These occur just at the point where Statius is describing a version of events contrary to what is found in Sophocles, and so perhaps constitute an acknowledgment by the poet that the audience might have a different version of the story in mind. I hope this proves to be more than just an exercise in source-criticism, for I want to argue that the competition of Sophoclean and Euripidean models at the end of the *Thebaid* has important ramifications for how we interpret the epic.[3]

Our hunt for hints of Sophocles starts at the end of Book 11 of the *Thebaid*. Statius follows Euripides' *Phoenician Women* quite closely here, and so Oedipus is still alive and resident in Thebes at the end of the war, in contrast to the version of events found in Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus*, where Oedipus dies in exile soon after the beginning of hostilities. In the *Thebaid*, Creon, the new king of Thebes, sends Oedipus into exile after the deaths of Eteocles and Polynices, just as he does at the end of the *Phoenician Women*. Oedipus reacts angrily:

> linquere tecta iubes? caelum terramque reliqui
> sponte, atque ultricem crudelis in ora retorsi
> non ullo cogente manum: quid tale iubere,
> rex inimice, potes? fugio excedoque nefandis
> sedibus; an refert quo funera longa measque
> transportem tenebras? ne non gens cuncta precanti
> concedat, patriae quantum miser incubo terrae?
>
> (Stat. *Theb*. 11.692–8)

> Are you ordering me to leave the palace? I have left heaven and earth of my own free will, and have cruelly turned my avenging hand on my eyes, though no one compelled me. What can you, my king and enemy, command to equal that? I flee, and depart this unholy place; does it matter where I convey my blindness and my lingering death? [Should I fear] that not every nation will grant my prayer for as much of their native soil as my miserable body occupies?[4]

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[3] The focus of Franchet d'Espèrey (1999, 88 ff., 277 ff., 310 ff.), who discusses myth, legend and some tragical sources, is on the composition of the *Thebaid*.

[4] All translations are my own.

The question asked here, “does it matter where Oedipus dies?”, is about as good a brief summary of the dramatic crux of the *Oedipus at Colonus* as you will find, and Oedipus anticipates here the events of that play. Of course, Euripides and Statius move those events into the future, whereas for Sophocles, they have already happened. So Statius overtly follows Euripides’ version of the timing of events, while casting the language in terms that recall Sophocles.

This hint of the *Oedipus at Colonus* is echoed a little bit later, when Statius’ Creon confirms Oedipus’ exile, rejecting Antigone’s pleas. As a concession, he allows Oedipus to remain within Theban territory, so long as he stays out of the city, and keeps to Mount Cithaeron, where he was exposed as a baby:

> flectitur adfatu, sed non tamen omnia rector
> supplicis indulget lacrimis partemque recidit
> muneris. ‘haud,’ inquit, ‘patriis prohibebere longe
> finibus, occursu dum non pia templa domosque
> commacules. habeant te lustra tuusque Cithaeron;’
>
> (Stat. *Theb*. 11.748–52)

> The ruler is moved by [Antigone’s] speech, but he does not entirely indulge the suppliant’s tears, and he keeps back a part of his gift. ‘You will not’, he says, ‘be forced very far away from your home territory, provided that you do not defile its holy temples and our homes with your presence. Let the wilds of your own Cithaeron accommodate you’.

The notion of Oedipus returning to Cithaeron has been borrowed from Sophocles via Seneca’s *Phoenissae*.[5] The particular idea of Creon banishing Oedipus to this mountain is a novel one, however, which Statius seems to have invented. Why? The answer is that he is reminding us of his earlier Sophoclean query whether it matters where Oedipus is exiled and buried. It turns out to matter very much, and for this reason Sophocles’ Creon tries to get Oedipus back to Thebes, but not inside the city, just outside it. Ismene warns her father:

> Ισ.] Ὥς σ᾽ ἄγχι γῆς στήσωσι Καδμείας, ὅπως
> κρατῶσι μὲν σοῦ, γῆς δὲ μὴ ᾽μβαίνῃς ὅρων.
>
> (S. *OC* 399–400)

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[5] The *tuus Cithaeron* of Statius’ Creon is an echo of the *meus Cithaeron* of Seneca’s Oedipus (13), which is in turn an echo of Sophocles’ οὑμὸς Κιθαιρὼν οὗτος (*OR* 1452): Frank 1995, 81. The setting of the beginning of Seneca’s drama is not explicitly stated, but seems to be on Cithaeron; see Frank 1995, 13. On these lines of the *Thebaid*, see also Hardie 1997, 152.

> Is.] That they may settle you near the land of Thebes, to have you in their power, but your foot would not cross its border.

Statius' Euripidean Creon has an inkling of what Sophocles' Creon, in a parallel mythological universe, wanted to do with Oedipus.

Moving now to the twelfth book of the *Thebaid*, we find that it is divided clearly into three parts. The first part deals with the aftermath of the war and then gives a mini-epic-catalogue of the women who have set out from Argos with Argia, wife of Polynices, at their head, going to Thebes in order to ask for the burial of their male kin. We will skip this first part of Book 12, which does not engage much with Sophocles, and we will deal with the remaining two parts under the separate headings of "Argia" and "Athens".

Argia

After the first part of Book 12, the narrative comes to a literal and metaphorical crossroad at lines 141–2, when the women of Argos encounter a fleeing Argive soldier who warns them that it will take force, not prayers, to sway Creon, and suggests that they go to Athens instead to seek the help of Theseus:

> quin ...
> ...
> aut uos Cecropiam—prope namque et Thesea fama est
> Thermodontiaco laetum remeare triumpho—
> imploratis opem? bello cogendus et armis
> in mores hominemque Creon.
>
> (Stat. *Theb*. 12.160–6)

> Or why not implore Athenian help? They say that Theseus is near, returning successfully from a victory near the river Thermodon. It is by war and weapons that Creon must be forced to abide by the customs of the human race.

This moment also brings to mind divergent tragic narratives, since Plutarch tells us that in stark contrast to Euripides' *Suppliant Women,* in Aeschylus' *Eleusinians*, Theseus used persuasion rather than force to induce Creon to allow the burial of the Argive dead.[6]

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[6] Plu. *Thes*. 29; on the contrast between the accounts of Aeschylus and Euripides, see Gantz 1993, 296. On these lines of the *Thebaid*, see Dominik 1994, 42.

At this crossroads, Statius' narrative diverges, just as the versions of Aeschylus and Euripides diverged. Argia convinces the other women of Argos that they should change their course and go to Athens to seek Theseus' armed assistance, while she says that she will carry on to Thebes alone, and pretends that her intention is to approach the parents and sisters of Polynices, her dead husband, namely Oedipus and Jocasta, Antigone and Ismene. In fact, she has no such intention. Her soliloquy that follows shows that she doubts the success of the mission to Athens, and feels in any case that it would take too long. Driven on a heroic, single-minded quest by the thought of Polynices' decaying body, her solitary trip to Thebes can only be described as an *aristeia*.[7] In her single-mindedness, her unwillingness to brook delay, her readiness to deceive her follow travellers so that she has the freedom to act alone, and her insistence on attending to the corpse of Polynices alone, she calls to mind precisely the qualities of Sophocles' Antigone. As we will see, Argia and Antigone will shortly encounter one another in a scene over which the presence of Sophocles' play hangs heavily.

So Argia's part of *Thebaid* 12 (lines 197–311) begins with the heroine travelling headlong to Thebes; she is alone except for an elderly and essentially useless male companion as chaperon. She climbs mountains, fords rivers, and travels through dangerous forests, pressing on despite cold, darkness, and wild animals in a truly heroic and solitary effort. Then, when she arrives at Thebes, she heads right for the battlefield, slipping on the gore, ignoring the pain as she stumbles over discarded weapons. In recognition of this heroic effort, Juno looks down on her with pity and assists her by lighting her way with moonlight.[8]

Statius had applied the apparatus of epic machinery to the women of Argos when he began Book 12 with a formal catalogue of mourning women setting out on an expedition; Argia's exploits are portrayed as a heroic *aristeia,* driven by mourning; and so it is fitting that we will also be treated to an epic duel between mourning women. Statius has been building up to this confrontation, since the absence of Antigone has been made particularly acute by the attribution of her

[7] More generally, "the wives and mothers each have their *aristeia* of grief": Lovatt 1999, 145.

[8] On Argia's heroism, see Vessey 1973, 131–3 and Lovatt 1999, 137: "Argia is more of a hero than her husband ever was".

paradigmatic single-mindedness to Argia. After Argia discovers the body of Polynices, it is she who brings up the question of the strange absence of Sophocles' heroine:

> nullasne tuorum
> mouisti lacrimas? ubi mater, ubi incluta fama
> Antigone?
>
> (Stat. *Theb*. 12.330–2)

> Did you move none of your own family to tears? Where is your mother, where is the renowned Antigone?

Where, indeed, is Antigone? The literal question of Antigone's whereabouts on the battlefield is echoed in the mind of the audience on the level of literature, and this transference of sense is authorized by Argia's reference to the fame of Antigone. For Argia, Antigone's fame rests on her past as a dutiful daughter and sister; but for the audience, in this context above all, it is an unmistakable reference to the fame of Sophocles' heroine.[9] The very phrase *incluta fama* is itself a pleonastic etymological figure that links the Latin *incluta* to the Greek κλυτά, and so puts us in mind of Greek language and literature.

As Antigone then makes her belated appearance on the battlefield, she indignantly rebukes this stranger who has upstaged her, taken the place that in literary history is rightfully hers:

> 'cuius' ait 'manes, aut quae temeraria quaeris
> nocte mea?'
>
> (Stat. *Theb*. 12.366–7)

> She cried: 'Whose body do you seek in this night that is mine? Who are you, daring woman?'

"Who are you and what are you doing here in my role?", Antigone asks, and once again the question functions on the level of literary history as much as on the concrete level of the situation on the battlefield.[10]

Even as Statius fails to follow Sophocles here, he really wants us to notice that fact. This is emphasised again by Antigone when she scolds herself for having allowed another to take the place meant for her:

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[9] Pollmann 2004, 166. On the presence here of Antigone's "literary heritage", see Hershkowitz 1994, 143 with n. 42.

[10] Pollmann 2004, 174.

> cedo, tene, pudet heu! pietas ignaua sororis!
> haec prior— !
>
> (Stat. *Theb*. 12.384–5)
>
> Take him, he is yours! Ah, shame! Ah, for the sluggish devotion of a sister! <u>This woman was here first</u>![11]

Once again, Antigone's exclamation also operates on the level of literary history.[12] "This woman was here first!" not only refers to Argia's usurpation of Antigone's rightful role, it may also refer to the fact that in archaic Greek poetry before the composition of Sophocles' play, it is always Argia who buries Polynices; Antigone's involvement in the burial of Polynices was probably a Sophoclean invention.[13]

So who ***is*** writing the script here, if not Sophocles? If Antigone has been upstaged by Argia, what writer has upstaged Sophocles? Let us examine the development of the plot. Argia and Antigone condole and commiserate and then collaborate in finding a pyre for Polynices. When they unwittingly put his body on the still-burning pyre of Eteocles, it explodes and the flames of the two brothers continue fighting even after death. This version of events shares some similarities with the account in Hyginus, which in turn has sometimes been assumed to depend on some tragedian, perhaps Euripides, and perhaps his own *Antigone*.[14] It would be nice and neat if we had here another place where Statius had to make a choice between Sophocles and Euripides for his plot and chose the latter, but there really is no hard evidence to implicate Euripides, despite the attractiveness of the hypothesis that his *Antigone* rewrote Sophocles' drama in this way. One Greek writer who did tell of the duelling flames of the dead brothers is Callimachus, and it is Ovid who tells us this, but we do not have enough information to know the nature or extent of Statius' debt to that poet at

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11 In his Loeb edition, Shackleton Bailey (2003, 277) translates *haec prior* as "*This* has first place," and explains elsewhere (1983, 60) what exactly this means: "This (wifely) love takes precedence of a sister's", taking *haec* to agree with *pietas*. Pollmann (2004, 178) rightly rejects this awkward translation, and to her arguments one could add that it is most natural to take *prior* as explaining *ignaua* in the previous line: the woman who has come in second reproaches herself for her torpor.

12 See Lovatt 1999, 138: "Yet again Statius plays with belatedness and priority: the intruder in the story has taken over the central role."

13 Gantz 1993, 519–20, assuming that the end of Aeschylus' *Seven against Thebes* is interpolated; see also Hoffman 1999, 8. I owe this point to Ettore Cingano.

14 Hyg. *Fab*. 72. On the serious problems entailed by using Hyginus to reconstruct Euripides' *Antigone*, see Jouan and van Looy 1998, 193–201.

this point.[15] The best we can say is that the prominence given to Argia and the story of the divided pyre present us with a decidedly non-Sophoclean picture. Nonetheless, the themes that Statius explores will continue to be intensely Sophoclean.

We have been expecting that Argia's heroic quest will culminate in an epic duel, and right after the brothers' implacable, posthumous hatred, a different sort of hatred is manifested:

> ambitur saeua de morte animosaque leti
> spes furit: haec fratris rapuisse, haec coniugis artus
> contendunt uicibusque probant: 'ego corpus', 'ego ignes',
> 'me pietas', 'me duxit amor'. deposcere saeua
> supplicia et dextras iuuat insertare catenis.
> nusquam illa alternis modo quae reuerentia uerbis,
> iram odiumque putes; tantus discordat utrimque
> clamor, et ad regem qui deprendere trahuntur.
>
> (Stat. *Theb.* 12.456–63)

> They are zealous for a cruel death, and a lively hope of extinction rages within them. They contend that they stole, the one her husband's, the other her brother's limbs, and in turns they demonstrate their case: 'I brought the body'; 'I brought the fire'; 'I was led by duty,' 'I by affection'. They delight in asking for brutal punishment and in putting their wrists into the chains. Gone is the mutual respect that was in the words of each; you would think it anger and hatred, so great is the shouting on either side; and they drag the men who have captured them before the king.

The commiseration and exchange of sympathy between them has passed with the moment and the Argive woman and the Theban woman resume their hostility. Despite their cooperation in seeing to the corpse of Polynices, they are still competing for the role of Antigone the martyr.[16] And so once again, this scene can be read on the level of literary history. What better description of the theme of Sophocles' *Antigone* could there be than to say that it shows how *pietas* and *amor* (devotion and love) can harden into *iram odiumque* (anger and hatred)? It is not just in volunteering to be Creon's victim that the two women compete for the role of Antigone, but in their hatred and implacability, too.

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[15] Ov. *Tr.* 5.33–9, and Call. *Fr.* 105 (Pfeiffer).

[16] Lovatt 1999, 144: "Argia and Antigone are set against each other at the last by rivalry in grief, … both fight for the central role in the story".

If we peek ahead for a moment, we find that after Athens the scene returns again to Thebes with the advent of Theseus, and when it does, the two women are still poised in the same attitude of self-immolation, frozen in defiance, despite the passing of much time:

> saeuus at interea ferro post terga reuinctas
> Antigonen uiduamque Creon Adrastida leto
> admouet; ambae hilares et mortis amore superbae
> ensibus intentant iugulos regemque cruentum
> destituunt, cum dicta ferens Theseia Phegeus
> astitit.
>
> (Stat. *Theb*. 12.677–82)

> But meanwhile cruel Creon brings Antigone and the widowed daughter of Adrastus forward to their deaths, their hands bound behind them with chains; both are cheerful and proud in their desire for death; they hold out their necks to the swords and disappoint the blood-thirsty king, when all of a sudden Phegeus stood there, bearing Theseus' message.

As it turns out, they are saved by the bell, and events hasten to bring an end to Creon rather than to them. Or at least Argia is saved, since we hear about her later; Statius leaves the door open to the possibility that Antigone did perish at this moment.[17] It is worth noting here that Phegeus is not an ordinary epic herald: he has no substantive role in the epic; the message he delivers is vaguely described and adds little to the plot, since the arrival of the Athenian force is already evident and Theseus will shortly confront Creon face to face. So why is he here? He is in fact an escapee from another genre. The messenger is a tragic figure *par excellence*, and his appearance here in epic is a signal of crossing genres. In fact, in Euripides' *Suppliant Women*, Theseus does send a messenger to Thebes, but calls him back when a messenger happens to arrive from Thebes at that very moment. Dramatic unity of space demanded that Euripides' confrontation between representatives of Thebes and Athens should take place at Eleusis, but Statius operates under no such constraint, and so the messenger sent by Euripides' Theseus tumbles through time and space and genres until he finally arrives in Statius' epic. The sudden appearance of a messenger here is an acknowledgement to us that this Theban tableau is paradigmatically tragic. Creon about to put the defiant Antigone to death, the sudden arrival of a messenger with surprising news: all this

[17] Pollmann 2004, 196; Argia is mentioned again at 12.804.

must make us think of Sophocles' *Antigone*, even as the presence of Argia and the mission of Phegeus signal that Statius is following a Euripidean, or at least non-Sophoclean, tradition.

Athens

After the arrest of Argia and Antigone, the scene switches to Athens, where the rest of the Argive women are just arriving. They make straight for the 'Altar of Mercy' or *Clementia*, which is probably to be identified with the altar of the twelve gods, the central milestone in the Athenian agora.[18] This passage is one of the most frequently studied parts of the poem, but I want to look not at the fascinating account Statius gives of its cult, but rather at his account of its aetiology:

> fama est defensos acie post busta paterni
> numinis Herculeos sedem fundasse nepotes.
> fama minor factis: ipsos nam credere dignum
> caelicolas, tellus quibus hospita semper Athenae,
> ceu leges hominemque nouum ritusque sacrorum
> seminaque in uacuas hinc descendentia terras,
> sic sacrasse loco commune animantibus aegris
> confugium, unde procul starent iraeque minaeque
> regnaque, et a iustis Fortuna recederet aris.
> iam tunc innumerae norant altaria gentes:
> huc uicti bellis patriaque a sede fugati
> regnorumque inopes scelerumque errore nocentes
> conueniunt pacemque rogant; mox hospita sedes
> uicit et Oedipodae Furias et funus Olynthi
> texit et a misero matrem summouit Oreste.
> huc uulgo monstrante locum manus anxia Lernae
> deueniunt, cedunt miserorum turba priorum.
>
> (Stat. *Theb.* 12.497–513)

> The report is that the descendants of Hercules, supported in battle after the death of their divine father, set up this altar; but this report comes short of the truth: for it is fitting to believe that the heavenly ones themselves, to whom Athens was always a hospitable land, just as they once gave laws, and a new man, and sacred mysteries, and the seeds that descended here upon the sterile earth, now sanctified in this spot a common refuge for wounded beings, from which anger and threats and

[18] This would give an extremely precise geographical force to Statius' claim that it was located *urbe ... media* (12.481). On the identification of this altar with the altar of the twelve gods, see the careful argument of Stafford 2000, 199–225.

> power would be far removed, so that Fortune would depart from this righteous altar. This altar was known already to countless races: those defeated in war and those exiled from their country, kings who had lost their thrones, and those guilty of grievous crime, all assemble here and seek peace. Soon this hospitable place would conquer the furies of Oedipus, would shelter the ruin of Olynthus, and would protect poor Orestes from his mother. To this place came the worried band of Argos, with the people showing them where the place was, and the crowd of wretched people who were there before them give way.

It is clear that this passage is dense with allusions to Greek tragedy. First of all, this entire episode in which the Argive women come to Athens is taken from Euripides' *Suppliant Women*, but Statius changes the venue from the sanctuary of Demeter at Eleusis to this place at the center of Athens. Why? He wants to generalize the principle of granting succor to suppliants embodied in the *Suppliant Women*, and to make it central to Athens both geographically and culturally. He does this by invoking three other examples, one from each of the great tragedians, to demonstrate that the principle goes far beyond the plot of the *Suppliant Women*. First, he mentions the children of Heracles, ostensibly to reject a chronologically inconvenient version of the founding of the altar that would associate it with them and thus with the generation after Theseus. But this also puts us in mind of Euripides' play by that name, which, like its fellow "political" play, the *Suppliant Women*, illustrates the cultural superiority of Athens in the way it deals with suppliant foreigners. The Heraclidae would have been fitting founders of this altar, were it not for the chronological difficulty, which Statius evades by implying that they were simply early pilgrims to the altar, rather than its founders.

Then we come to Oedipus finding rest from his Furies; this is an allusion to the *Oedipus at Colonus* of Sophocles, which, as it turns out, Statius wants to shift not only in time, but also in space, moving its events from Colonus to the Athenian agora. Skipping Olynthus for a moment, we then come to the *Eumenides* of Aeschylus, which likewise involves a spatial realignment, since that play is so strongly associated with the Areopagus. All three of these plays, the *Eumenides*, the *Oedipus at Colonus*, and the *Children of Heracles*, are suppliant dramas in which a downtrodden foreigner comes to Attica to ask Athens for help and protection. So the suppliant women of *Thebaid* 12 play out the plot of not just one particular Euripidean drama, but ex-

emplify something intrinsic to the spirit of Athens as expressed in dramas by each of its three great playwrights.

So much is clear. What may not be clear at first is that Statius is importing these various tragic models into his epic by way of a third genre: Athenian patriotic oratory. Many of these episodes make up what Roger Brock, in his study of the use of these tropes in the *epitaphios logos* and related speeches, has called "the mythological battle honours of the Athenian state".[19] The biggest clue to this intersection of Athenian tragedy and patriotic rhetoric is the mention of the fate of Olynthus at the hands of Philip alongside the other mythological parallels. Most editors have obelized this phrase, expecting another myth, but no convincing alternative has presented itself. Shackleton Bailey guardedly accepts the transmitted text in his Loeb edition, pointing out that this is a trope of oratory, and giving some citations from Roman sources.[20] In fact, there is another passage in one of these rhetorical sources, Seneca's *Controversiae*, which links the destruction of Olynthus with the altar of Mercy at Athens. This is unlikely to be due to coincidence or cross-contamination, so it provides a pretty solid basis for accepting the transmitted text of Statius as genuine, while also demonstrating the heavy use Statius is making here of overtly rhetorical material.[21] It is precisely to jolt us into thinking about Athenian patriotic oratory and its appropriation of these tragic myths that Statius includes Olynthus here: it is meant to stand out from the context, as a signal of the declamatory source of this entire passage. In the tradition of the funeral oration, it was commonplace for Athenian orators to recall precisely these mythical episodes when praising their city's hospitality and benefactions to mankind. For example, Is-

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[19] Brock 1998, 227.

[20] Shackleton Bailey 2003, 286–7. His note reads, "Olynthus, a town in northeastern Greece, was taken by Philip of Macedon in 348 and the inhabitants sold into slavery, but many found refuge in Athens. Their fate became a theme for declaimers (Seneca, *Controversies* 3.8, Ps.-Quintilian, *Shorter Declamations* 292). The anachronistic mention between two figures of mythology is certainly strange and generally considered unbelievable. But no satisfactory substitute has been proposed."

[21] In *Controversiae* 10.5, a sadistic Athenian painter who has abused a refugee from Olynthus to use him as a model for Prometheus in agony is ironically suggested to dedicate his painting at the altar of Mercy; see Stafford 2000, 218f. Anyone who wishes to claim that the text of Statius is corrupt here must now explain how it is that references to the destruction of Olynthus and to the altar of Mercy at Athens, both of which are individually quite rare in surviving Latin literature, happen to be linked together in two quite unrelated texts.

ocrates' panegyric of Athens links the suppliant children of Heracles with the suppliant Argives, before going on to Athens' victory over the Amazons (which also features prominently in Statius' account). Earlier he mentions the gift of Demeter, and the fact that Athens was the first to create laws and a city, connecting the latter with the founding of the Areopagus court. The Demosthenian *epitaphios* moves quickly from the victory over the Amazons to the children of Heracles and the intervention of Theseus against Creon, while the *epitaphios* in the Lysian corpus covers the same examples at much greater length. In Plato's mock panegyric in the *Menexenus*, the defeat of the Amazons is linked again to the protection offered to the Argives and the children of Heracles. And so on.[22]

An important part of this oratorical tradition was the notion of Athens as a "refuge" for the rest of Greece. The usual term for this was καταφυγή, sometimes modified by the adjective κοινή, as in this passage from Aeschines:[23]

> Ἡ δ' ἡμετέρα πόλις, ἡ κοινὴ καταφυγὴ τῶν Ἑλλήνων, πρὸς ἣν ἀφικνοῦντο πρότερον ἐκ τῆς Ἑλλάδος αἱ πρεσβεῖαι, κατὰ πόλεις ἕκαστοι παρ' ἡμῶν τὴν σωτηρίαν εὑρησόμενοι
>
> (Aeschin. 3.134)

> And our city, the common refuge of the Greeks, to which in former days used to come the embassies of all Hellas, each city in turn to find safety with us

The bilingual Statius has reproduced precisely the meaning, sound, and alliteration of the Greek phrase κοινὴ καταφυγή in his Latin phrase ***commune … confugium*** (12.503–4). Note that the emphasis Statius wants to put on this notion of Athens as a refuge puts a bit of a strain on the immediate context, since the Argive women do not in fact want a refuge, they want a champion to go on the offensive.[24]

Why does Statius want to repeat these Athenian oratorical tropes, which emphasised that city's tradition of φιλοξενία (kindness to strangers), in contrast to the insularity of the Spartans? My argument is that he wants this cosmopolitan vision of Athens to be the model for

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22 Isocrates, *Panegyricus* 28, 39f, 54–70; see also *Panathenaicus* 168–74. Demosthenes, 60.8. Lysias 2.4–19. Plato, *Menexenus* 239B. For a full bibliography, see Brock 1998.

23 See also Demosthenes, *Letters* 3.11.

24 Euripides had already dramatised Theseus' movement from passive pity to active intervention: see Lloyd 1992, 77–8.

contemporary Rome. By emphasizing Athens' origins as an asylum, he makes it parallel to Romulus' settlement. Here is Dionysius of Halicarnassus on the origins of Rome:

> ἱερὸν ἀνεὶς ἄσυλον ἱκέταις καὶ ναὸν ἐπὶ τούτῳ κατασκευασάμενος (ὅτῳ δὲ ἄρα θεῶν ἢ δαιμόνων οὐκ ἔχω τὸ σαφὲς εἰπεῖν) τοῖς καταφεύγουσιν εἰς τοῦτο τὸ ἱερὸν ἱκέταις τοῦ τε μηδὲν κακὸν ὑπ' ἐχθρῶν παθεῖν ἐγγυητὴς ἐγίνετο τῆς εἰς τὸ θεῖον εὐσεβείας προφάσει καὶ εἰ βούλοιντο παρ' αὐτῷ μένειν πολιτείας μετεδίδου καὶ γῆς μοῖραν, ἣν κτήσαιτο πολεμίους ἀφελόμενος.
>
> (D.H. 2.15.4)

> He [Romulus] dedicated a sacred asylum for suppliants, and provided it with a temple (but to which of the gods or divine powers I am not able to say for certain). On the pretence of religious piety, he became the protector of those who fled to this sanctuary as suppliants, lest they suffer any harm from their enemies; and if they decided to stay with him, he shared the citizenship with them and a part of any land that might be taken from the enemy.

Not only is the general character of the Roman asylum and those who seek its shelter reminiscent of Statius' depiction of the Athenian *ara Clementiae*, but even the uncertainty regarding the god to whom it was dedicated finds an echo in Statius' negative depiction of the altar. He stresses that it was ***not*** dedicated to a powerful god, and that it conspicuously lacked a cult statue (***Theb.*** 12.481–2 and 493–4). The only major difference between Romulus' Rome as depicted by Dionysius and Theseus' Athens as depicted by Statius seems to be that the Roman asylum was founded with the goal of increasing the population of the nascent city. And yet, if we look closely, Statius gives us a hint of this sort of activity in Theseus' Athens, too.

In addition to sheltering runaways, another population-building strategy used by Romulus at the foundation of Rome was the rape of the Sabine women. They were carried off by force, but eventually came to settle into their new roles as Roman wives and mothers.[25] Now compare Statius' description of Theseus. When we first meet him, he is just returning to Athens from conquering the Amazons at the moment that the Argive women arrive:

> ipsae autem nondum trepidae sexumue fatentur,
> nec uulgare gemunt, aspernanturque precari,
> et tantum innuptae quaerunt delubra Mineruae.

[25] See Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Antiquitates Romanae* 2.30.

primus amor niueis uictorem cernere uectum
quadriiugis; nec non populos in semet agebat
Hippolyte, iam blanda genas patiensque mariti
foederis. hanc patriae ritus fregisse seueros
Atthides oblique secum mirantur operto
murmure, quod nitidi crines, quod pectora palla
tota latent, magnis quod barbara semet Athenis
misceat atque hosti ueniat paritura marito.

(Stat. *Theb*. 12.529–39)

They [the Amazons] themselves are not yet fearful, nor do they betray their true sex, nor complain boorishly; they refuse to beg and they seek only the shrine of unmarried Minerva. The first desire [of the Athenians] is to see the conqueror, drawn by his four snow-white horses. Hippolyte also attracted attention, friendly now in her expression and enduring the bond of marriage. The women of Athens look askance and mutter quietly to themselves as they are amazed that she has broken the strict laws of her country, that her hair is clean, that her entire chest is hidden beneath her tunic, and that, although a barbarian, she merges herself with mighty Athens, and comes to bear offspring to her enemy husband.

This Roman-style triumphal procession also looks to a Roman mythical model: the rape of the Sabine women. The implication is that not only Hippolyte, but also the other Amazons, will, like the Sabine women, overcome their initial hostility towards their captors and become a part of the Athenian polis; hence the muttering and resentment of the native women.[26] Contrary to the usual version of events in Athenian oratory, which depicted the Amazons as a barbarian force to be extirpated, here they arrive as forcibly imported blood-stock, just as Romulus had done. The rape of Hippolyte and the Amazons is a part of the Greek oratorical tradition, but this domestic side of the arrangement is not usually emphasised.[27] Plutarch, in fact, in his *syncrisis* of Theseus and Romulus, sets up an opposition between the justified and purposeful rape orchestrated by Romulus, and the many rapes of Theseus, including the Amazons, which were done out of

[26] Pollmann 2004, 217–8 argues that the hostility of the native women and the mention of “offspring” foreshadows the tragic conflict between her son and Phaedra in Euripides’ *Hippolytus*. Ahl 1986, 2891–2 emphasizes the hostility between captors and captives in this scene.

[27] Mills 1997, 31–2 argues that the experience of the Persian wars made the marriage between Theseus and Antiope / Hippolyte an unwelcome detail to the Athenians, and so it came to be suppressed thereafter. If this is true, it is possible that Statius’ domestic picture had an earlier Greek model.

mere hubris and lust (5.2). Statius, in stark contrast, gives us a Theseus who is a close parallel for Romulus. So Statius, with one foot in Greek culture and one in the Roman, envisions Rome as a cosmopolis that has inherited Athens' famous tradition of φιλοξενία as a main source of its strength. This comes out in his *Silvae* as well; for example, in one poem (4.5) Statius, himself quite Greek welcomes the half-Punic ancestor of the emperor Septimius Severus to Rome and assures him that he is quite the genuine Italian gentleman.[28]

Before ending on that happy, multi-cultural note, I want to suggest a darker overtone to this connection between Athens and Rome. There is one final Sophoclean moment in the *Thebaid* to consider. In the *Suppliant Women*, Euripides' Theseus explicitly scorns heroic / Aeschylean static battle descriptions (846–56), so instead the playwright provides us, via a messenger speech, with a 'modern' and realistic account of the tactics and manoeuvres of the forces of Theseus and Creon (650–733). Statius, in defiance of these strictures, gives us a static, traditional epic confrontation between Creon and Theseus of the sort that Euripides' Theseus had mocked; they trade insults across the battlefield before trading throws of the spear. One obvious model for this is the Homeric epic battle scene, but there is also a tragic model for this particular enounter. In the *Oedipus at Colonus*, Creon and Theseus come close to blows on-stage, and exchange pointed remarks.[29] In fact, Statius' Creon enthusiastically asserts an insult that Sophocles' Creon had diplomatically declined:

> Κρ.] Ἐγὼ οὔτ' ἄνανδρον τήνδε τὴν πόλιν λέγω,
> ὦ τέκνον Αἰγέως, οὔτ' ἄβουλον, ὡς σὺ φῄς
>
> (S. *OC* 939–40)
>
> Cr.] I am not calling your city unmanly, son of Aegeus, nor heedless either, as you claim.

> 'non cum peltiferis', ait, 'haec tibi pugna puellis,
> uirgineas ne crede manus: hic cruda uirorum
> proelia'
>
> (Stat. *Theb.* 12.761–3)

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[28] See Coleman 1988, 158–73. On Rome as cosmopolis, see Turcan 2006; on Statius and cosmopolitanism, see Woolf 2003, 207–12.

[29] The importance of the Theseus of *Oedipus at Colonus* as a model for Statius' Theseus is noted by Dietrich 1999, 43–4.

> It's not with girls carrying tiny little shields that you do battle here; do not believe that these are the hands of a maiden; here you will find the bloody warfare of men

At the climax of a Euripidean narrative, whose plot is largely adapted from the *Suppliant Women*, Statius has inserted a Sophoclean moment of direct confrontation between Creon and Theseus. Why does he allude to the *Oedipus at Colonus* here? Why did he earlier include the asylum granted to Oedipus along with the other, more usual examples of Athenian benefactions to strangers? One answer is that the *Oedipus at Colonus*, written at the end of Sophocles' life, serves as a powerful ending to the Theban story, and even though Statius rejects its chronology of events, he nevertheless invokes its spirit of closure.

By pushing the asylum and death of Oedipus to the end of the story of the house of Oedipus, just beyond the end of his own narrative, Statius contradicts Sophocles and follows the *Phoenician Women*, in which Euripides said that Oedipus was still alive during the siege of Thebes; but on another level, Statius is being true to the spirit of Sophocles. Even though the plot of the *Oedipus at Colonus* comes in the middle of his three Theban plays, nevertheless the death of Oedipus and the great old age of Sophocles when he wrote it override these prosaic concerns. For Statius, the *Oedipus at Colonus* is rightfully the final work in Sophocles' Theban cycle, despite mythical chronology, and that is why it is yoked by Statius with the *Eumenides* as examples of Athenian succor and tragic closure.[30] Paradoxically, the seemingly Euripidean move of keeping Oedipus alive through the siege of Thebes serves ultimately to "correct" the chronological order of the Sophoclean trilogy, emphasizing the spirit of finality in the *Oedipus at Colonus*.

Another way of looking at the presence of Sophocles here is that he provides a Theseus who is different to that of Euripides in a way which is useful to Statius. Euripides' Theseus initially rejects the Argive plea and lectures Adrastus in a hectoring tone, until his mother convinces him that he ought to help and that it is in his self-interest to do so. Euripides' Theseus embodies the strengths and weaknesses of the Athenian democracy. He loves to talk, he rules by consultation and

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[30] This link was, of course, already made by Sophocles, who has Oedipus enter a grove of the Eumenides at Colonus: Edmunds 1996, 138–42. On Statius' allusion to the end of the *Oresteia*, see Hardie 1993, 46.

consensus, he changes his mind radically from one moment to the next, and he has a strong sense of self-interest.[31] By contrast, Sophocles' Theseus offers refuge to Oedipus immediately and instinctively, even before he is aware that this will bring benefit to Athens. He is no democrat, and he does not feel the need to consult the citizens of Athens on his decision, because he knows that it is right.[32] This strong, decisive leader is a much better avatar of the Imperial virtue of *Clementia* and thus a better role-model for Domitian.[33] Accordingly, Statius' Theseus takes up the cause of the Argive women instantly, and decides to march to Thebes forthwith; there is none of the sophistry and debate of Euripides' *Suppliant Women*.

So there is one more way of thinking about the presence of Sophocles and the *Oedipus at Colonus* here. Just as Euripides' Theseus is a reflection of Athenian democracy, so the *Suppliant Women* as a whole reflects the confidence (or over-confidence) of the city in the years just before the Sicilian expedition. In contrast, the *Oedipus at Colonus* is a product of Sophocles' very old age, and was first produced only after Sophocles' death, and after Athens had been defeated by Sparta. Any work that juxtaposes the *Suppliant Women* and the *Oedipus at Colonus* in the way that Statius does will inevitably call to mind the highs and lows of the Peloponnesian War, which influenced both plays so deeply. Seen in a Roman light, perhaps the Peloponnesian War even becomes an echo of the war of the seven against Thebes. Just as the internal Greek conflict between Argos and Thebes exhausted both sides and enabled Athens easily to conquer the victor, so too the Peloponnesian War enabled outside powers—first Macedon, then Rome—eventually to dominate all of the participants. On this reading, the *Thebaid* proves to have a sudden relevance to Roman politics, as a warning not only against the dangers of civil war, but also of imperial over-stretch. Athens is not only a cosmopolitan model for Rome to emulate, but also an imperial fate to beware.

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31 See Michelini 1994.

32 On the tension in *Oedipus at Colonus* between Theseus the proto-democrat and Theseus the king, see Blundell 1993, 294–6. On the contrast between Euripides' Theseus and Statius', see Vessey 1973, 308 and Braund 1996, 9.

33 Thus Braund 1996, 9–16.

JUPITER IN *THEBAID* 1 AGAIN[*]

D. E. Hill

I have argued elsewhere[1] that, for whatever reason, Statius offered his readers a Jupiter who had little or no influence on the plot of the *Thebaid*, but was no more than a blustering buffoon. My arguments hitherto have been fairly broad brush; now, I should like to explore what a close and detailed analysis of Jupiter's opening speech and the build up towards it can teach us about Statius' Jupiter. Also, hitherto, my discussions on *Thebaid* 1 have concentrated on his debt to Virgil and paid less attention to detail, and to his debt to other authors, especially Ovid, than is warranted.

There are two sections to this paper. The first (1.56–87) is Oedipus' speech to Tisiphone designed to persuade her to wreak vengeance on his sons for their cruelty towards their father. The speech is bitter and intemperate, but it makes no claims to anything cosmic and is internally consistent. The second is on Jupiter's speech, also designed to bring vengeance upon Eteocles and Polynices but, as I shall hope to show, very different indeed.

Oedipus to Tisiphone: (1.56–9): The speech begins with Oedipus acknowledging his relationship with Tisiphone from birth, and his own warped character (1.60–72): he goes into detail on the way Tisiphone has guided his life from birth and crippling, through his desire to find his parents, his murder of his father, his solving of the riddle of the Sphinx, his incest with his mother, his self-blinding and the grotesque picture of his eyes on her. He fully admits to his sinfulness throughout his life. (1.73–87): now he calls upon Tisiphone to exact condign punishment on his sons because they have ill-treated him and because Jupiter has seen their sin and done nothing. Oedipus does not seek justice but revenge. Everything he says is logically if not morally defensible, even his complaint about Jupiter's indolence. It is, after all, another 110 lines before, finally, Jupiter notices anything.

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[*] This piece owes much to the helpful advice of Harm-Jan van Dam, Ruurd Nauta and Hans Smolenaars; its remaining faults are evidence of my obstinacy.

[1] Hill 1990, 98–118 and 1996b, 35–54.

In 1.114–96, Tisiphone, in response to Oedipus' request at 1.56–87, sets in motion the hatred between Eteocles and Polynices which is to dominate the epic. By 1.196 the plot is in full swing. Eteocles has banished Polynices, and an unruly citizen has given us a powerful denunciation of the alternating kingship together with serious doubts as to whether Eteocles will relinquish power at the end of the agreed twelve months or, indeed, ever. Now, at last, Jupiter reacts.

At (1.197 "But") tells us that the narrative is turning in quite another direction; cf. e.g. Virgil *Aeneid* 4.1, 12.1

Iouis imperiis "at Jupiter's commands" the grandiloquent phrase prepares us for the intervention of Jupiter (hitherto ignored) and creates the expectation that he will restore order, as he does, for instance, at Virgil *Aeneid* 1.223–96. More on this later.

rapidi super atria caeli | lectus concilio diuum conuenerat ordo | interiore poli (1.197–9 "over the hall of the rapid sky, the chosen order of the gods had convened in the inner sky"): these words, conjuring up the dignity and importance of the place, reinforce the reader's assumption that a council of the gods is about to occur. *conuenerat*: the pluperfect, as so often in narrative, suggests that the reader has somehow stumbled as a spectator into something that had already started; in this case into the council just as its proceedings were commencing. The divine council, with Zeus/Jupiter presiding, is an important feature of ancient epic (e.g. Hom. *Il.* 1.493–594, *Od.* 1.26–95, 5.3–42, Verg. *A.* 1.223–96, Ovid *Met.* 1.163–244). The gods are summoned, at least one of them makes a speech demanding something (though not here), and Zeus/Jupiter decides. It is interesting to note that immediately after the second Odyssean Council and after the Virgilian council, it is Hermes/Mercury who is sent down to earth to effect the command of Zeus/Jupiter, as will also occur after this speech of Jupiter's.

spatiis hinc omnia iuxta, | primaeque occiduaeque domus et fusa sub omni | terra atque unda die (1.199–201 "from here all things are close in space, both the eastern and the western domains, and the land and sea spread out under every sky."): everything, from the gods' perspective, is close to everything else, thus making omnipotence convenient and further exciting our expectations. At *Silv.* 1.4.73 Statius writes *occiduas primasque domos "western and eastern domains"* which guarantees the sense of east (from where the sun starts)

for *primaeque*, though here the word order makes this case slightly more difficult.

mediis sese arduus infert | *ipse deis* (1.201–2 “he himself on high takes himself among the gods”): *arduus*, the placing of *ipse* at the beginning of its line and the framing *mediis … deis* all conspire to suggest the might and dignity of Jupiter, softened by the benign but traditional picture suggested by *placido quatiens tamen omnia uultu* (1.202 “but shaking everything though with a calm face”; cf. e.g. Neptune at Virgil *A.* 1.142: *tumida aequora placat* “calms the raging seas”). Majesty is reasserted by *stellantique locat solio* (1.203 “he places himself on the starry throne”), with *se* “himself” understood from 1.201.

nec protinus ausi | *caelicolae ueniam donec pater ipse sedendi* | *tranquilla iubet esse manu* (1.203–5 “nor immediately did the heaven-dwellers dare, until the father himself with a calm hand bade them, sit”). For a moment, our attention is drawn from the magnificence of Jupiter to the other gods who dare not, until we turn back to Jupiter and watch him, with a calm gesture, give them permission to sit. *nec protinus ausi*: dare not what? Dare not sit, which we must infer from *sedendi*. But the effect of this way of arranging the detail is to reinforce still further the calm authority of Jupiter and the respect he is given by the other gods.

mox turba uagorum
semideum et summis cognati Nubibus Amnes
et compressa metu seruantes murmura Venti
aurea tecta replent.

(1.205–8)

Soon a crowd of wandering demi-gods and Rivers related to the highest Clouds and Winds, keeping from fear their murmurings repressed, filled the golden house.

Roman gods, like Roman aristocrats, like to be greeted by great crowds of humble and obedient supporters.

Note the humour of *compressa metu seruantes murmura Venti*, a humour that cannot be appreciated until the last word, *Venti*. But this in no way diminishes Jupiter’s grandeur. It is also worth remarking that *Amnes* and *Venti* are to have a significant role to play before book 1 is over.

mixta conuexa deorum | *maiestate tremunt, radiant maiore sereno* | *culmina et arcano florentes lumine postes* (1.208–10 “The dome trembles with the mingled majesty of the gods, the roofs shine in a

greater sky and the door-posts, blooming in a mysterious light"). The individual words continue to excite awe and wonder. The *maiestas* is *mixta* because it belongs to many gods (*deorum*): *sereno* is a noun meaning "a clear sky" hence Shackleton Bailey's: "the towers shine in a larger blue" though I am not convinced by "towers" for *culmina*. This preparatory section ends with *arcano … lumine* probably best understood as a "mystic" or "mysterious light" (*OLD* s.v. 3) to give a final element of sanctity to this magnificent introduction to Jupiter.

postquam iussa quies siluitque exterritus orbis, | *incipit ex alto (graue et inmutabile sanctis* | *pondus adest uerbis, et uocem fata sequuntur)* (1.211–3 "After quiet had been commanded and the fearful world was silent, he began from on high (there was a serious and immutable weight to his sacred words, and the fates followed his voice"). If the reader is not on the edge of his seat with anticipation he must have been asleep. And the speech opens:

> terrarum delicta nec exaturabile Diris
> ingenium mortale queror. quonam usque nocentum
> exigar in poenas? taedet saeuire corusco
> fulmine, iam pridem Cyclopum operosa fatiscunt
> bracchia et Aeoliis desunt incudibus ignes.
>
> (1.214–8)

> The sins of earth, and the mortals' character that cannot be sated by the Furies is what I am complaining of. How far must I go in inflicting punishment on the guilty? I am weary of raging with the flashing thunderbolt; for some time now the busy arms of the Cyclopes have grown weary and their fires have left the Aeolian anvils."

a ranting approach reminiscent of Jupiter's complaints in Ovid's council (*Met.* 1.182–98) although there is little or no verbal similarity. Statius' Jupiter might now be expected to give examples of human sin to justify his anger, but he does not. Instead, he alludes to two events, only marginally connected with himself, which he has perversely implied were attempts to restore order by means of violent punishment. Or, at least, that may be the sense Jupiter intends to convey. The connection between his weariness at vainly plying his thunderbolts and the stories of Phaëthon and the flood is left implicit. He may mean that previous sins and their punishments had failed to deter Phaëthon and the people who lived at the time of the flood. Or he may mean that the punishments inflicted on Phaëthon and the victims of the flood were no deterrent. Either is possible, but I am persuaded by *nil*

actum (1.222 “nothing was achieved”) that Jupiter saw Phaëthon and the drowned people as sinners whose punishment had had no effect. My following argument is based on that proposition, but if you prefer, the alternative solution can easily be appropriately adapted.[2]

atque adeo tuleram falso rectore solutos | *Solis equos, caelumque rotis errantibus uri,* | *et Phaëthontea mundum squalere fauilla* (1.219–21 “I had indeed suffered the loosing of Sun’s horses under a false driver, and the burning of the sky as the wheels strayed, and the world caked with Phaëthon’s ashes.”). This event cannot be represented as Jupiter’s unsuccessful attempt at punishment. Sol was an over indulgent father, Phaëthon was a silly boy, though, admittedly, he had caused great destruction. Jupiter’s role was to strike the boy with his thunderbolt, not to punish him or anyone else but to save the world from the destruction caused by Phaëthon’s incompetence. For us certainly, for Statius most probably, the truly memorable treatment of Phaëthon’s story is to be found in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* (2.1–339), a most delightful and humorous approach but one which contains no hint that Jupiter’s intervention is intended to be punitive.

nil actum (1.222 “nothing was achieved”): indeed so, but perhaps Jupiter’s second claim will be more persuasive: *neque tu ualida quod cuspide late* | *ire per inlicitum pelago, germane, dedisti* (1.222–3 “nor because you, my brother, with your strong spear allowed the sea to go widely through forbidden territory.”). Neptune’s permitting the sea to cover the earth, a place normally *inlicitum* to him, significantly also occurs in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* (1.260–347), although there Jupiter initiates the flood, Neptune merely assists and there the punishment is provoked by genuine human evil, the career of Lycaon. Also, in the *Metamorphoses,* the flood did have at least a temporary beneficial effect with the saving of Deucalion and Pyrrha. And so, after an introduction which led the reader to expect a ringing denunciation of Oedipus’ sons in response to Oedipus’ complaints we hear this petulant diatribe about the failure of previous punishments to improve mankind and no mention yet of Oedipus or his sons. But perhaps we should not be surprised. How did Jupiter know about Oedipus’ story? Oedipus himself had made no attempt to invoke Jupiter but had gone straight to Tisiphone, presumably because he believed her to be more powerful. The nearest he gets to invoking Jupiter is his

[2] For Phaethon in the proem to *Theb.* 1 cf. Rosati in this volume, 184–93.

brief aside at 1.79–80: *et uidet ista deorum | ignauus genitor* “And does the idle father of the gods see these things?”

But to return to Jupiter: *nunc geminas punire domos quis sanguinis auctor | ipse ego, descendo* (1.224–5 “now I am descending to punish two families of whose blood I am myself the founder”): why *geminas … domos*? We have been led to suppose that Jupiter is responding to complaints about the sins of Oedipus’ family; so what are these twin houses? A cryptic answer is followed by a slightly less opaque one: *Perseos alter in Argos | scinditur* (1.225–6 “the other divides off into Persean[3] Argos”), *Aonias fluit hic ab origine Thebas* (1.226 “this one flows from its source to Aonian Thebes.”). With *alter … hic* understand *sanguis* “bloodline” from the previous clause, but why *alter … hic* “the other … this one” rather than *alter … alter* “the one … the other” or *hic … ille* “this one … that one” or even *hic … alter* “this one … the other one”? The answer I suspect is that Jupiter, for some reason, wishes to involve Argos in the ensuing punishment but acknowledges that Thebes is the expected target. By using *alter* first he immediately tells us that there are to be two *sanguines* “bloodlines”, victims of his wrath, and he can hold our attention better by mentioning the Argive one, the surprising one, first and characterizing it as *alter*, leaving the other one to round off the sentence with the Theban *hic sanguis* we have been led to expect. To the possible objection that we have not been told of any report to the other gods of what is afoot, the obvious reply is that in circumstances of this kind the rumour mill can normally be relied on. It is, of course, true too that the house of Argos will be drawn deeply into the Theban tragedy.

But how can Jupiter claim to be the *sanguinis auctor* for Thebes and Argos? Shackleton Bailey quotes Vessey (I have not been able to trace from where):

> The ancients did not agree on mythological stemmatics, and Statius is often quite vague.

Indeed, modern taste does find reference to obscure genealogies tedious but anyone familiar with e.g. the *Iliad* or the Old Testament knows that ancient taste was different; Statius’ readers would expect Statius to be able to say how Jupiter could claim to be the ultimate origin of both Adrastus and Oedipus: according to Apollodorus, he is

[3] Argos is Persean because Jupiter’s son, Perseus, was born there to Danaë, the daughter of the Argive king, Acrisius.

justified in the case of Adrastus thus: Jupiter fathered Epaphus by Io (Apollod. 2.1.3), Libya was the daughter of Epaphus and the mother of Agenor and Belus; Belus fathered Danaüs who conquered Argos and called its inhabitants Danaï (Apollod. 2.1.4); Danaüs gave his daughter, Hypermnestra, to be married to Lynceus, the son of his brother, Aegyptus, with whom he had had a long and bitter quarrel (Apollod. 2.1.5). Lynceus and Hypermnestra had a son, Abas, the father of Acrisius (Apollod. 2.2.1), whose daughter, Danaë (Apollod. 2.2.2), bore Perseus to Jupiter (Apollod. 2.4.2). More directly, Abas had a daughter, Lysimache, whose son was Adrastus (Apollod.1.9.13). In the case of Oedipus, Apollodorus supports the case thus: Agenor, the brother of Belus, above, fathered Cadmus (Apollod. 3.1.1) who fathered Polydorus (Apollod. 3.4.2), the father of Labdacus, and Labdacus was the father of Laius (Apollod. 3.5.5), Oedipus' father (Apollod. 3.5.7).

mens cunctis imposta manet (1.227 "the mind bestowed on all of them remains"): Jupiter continues with a general comment before turning to specific crimes: *quis funera Cadmi* | *nesciat* (1.227–8 "Who does not know of the deaths of Cadmus?"): to what does *funera* refer? Mozley (1928) translates: "bloodshed" which he glosses: 'The slaughter of the armed warriors who sprang from the dragon's teeth'; but this will not do. The incident occurs also in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (3.26–130) where we are told (3.118–22) that they killed one another, and there is no suggestion that any guilt attaches to Cadmus. Shackleton Bailey renders *funera* "calamities" which I doubt is defensible but, even if it is, its implicit acknowledgement that Cadmus is only the victim of sin makes him out of place in this list. Perhaps Jupiter, in his confusion, is thinking of *uersi…funera Cadmi* (Lucan 3.189), but that refers to Cadmus' transformation into a snake. Lactantius Placidus is silent.

et totiens excitam a sedibus imis | *Eumenidum bellasse aciem* (1.228–9 "and that the host of the Furies stirred up from their lowest seats have gone to war so often."): Jupiter's vague non-specific reference to the Furies' attacks on the wicked should be compared for dramatic effect with Statius' narrative cited here by Heuvel:

> Stygias lustrare seueris
> Eumenidas perhibetur aquis; huc mergere suetae
> ora et anhelantes poto Phlegethonte cerastas,

> seu Thracum uertere domos, seu tecta Mycenes
> impia Cadmeumue larem.
>
> (4.53–7)

In Shackleton Bailey's translation:

> With his stern waters he is reputed to wash the Stygian Eumenides. They are wont, 'tis said, to sink their faces therein and the horned snakes that pant from draughts of Phlegethon whether they have wrecked Thracian dwellings or Mycene's impious roofs or the house of Cadmus."

Jupiter's intention is presumably that the following three problems *mala gaudia matrum* "mothers' evil joys" and *erroresque feros nemorum* "wild wanderings in the glades" and *et reticenda deorum* | *crimina* (1.229–31 "gods' crimes that should not be spoken of") should relate to *et totiens excitam a sedibus imis* | *Eumenidum bellasse aciem*. But, quite apart from the rhetorical weakness of such an interpretation (the striking tricolon, *mala gaudia … deorum crimina* sits ill in apposition to *bellasse aciem*), there remains the difficulty of deciding to whom these three instances apply. *mala gaudia matrum*, according to Lactantius Placidus, refers either to Agaue's killing of her son, Pentheus, or to Jocasta's marrying her son, Oedipus. In favour of Agaue, Heuvel cites Ovid's telling of the story at *Met.* 3.710–28 and he may well be right to do so in light of our ever growing belief that Jupiter had recently been reading the *Metamorphoses*. Heuvel also cites Lucan: *Erinys … qualis Agauen* | *inpulit* (1.572–5 "a Fury like the one that drove Agaue"), but there the Fury is encouraging the sin, not punishing it. According to Lactantius Placidus, *erroresque feros nemorum* refers to Athamas and Learchus. This story too is to be found in the *Metamorphoses* (4.496–538); but it seems wholly inappropriate as an example of Jupiter's need to punish humans. For one thing, according to Ovid, Athamas was driven mad by Tisiphone on the direct instruction of Juno. As usual, Juno's complaint had been that Jupiter had been unfaithful, this time with Semele, and had fathered a son, Bacchus. Since, through Juno's trickery, Semele was now dead, her sister, Ino, had taken on the role of foster mother to Bacchus. As a result, she had incurred the wrath of Juno, who had sent Tisiphone to drive her husband, Athamas, mad and to provoke him into killing their son, Learchus (an uneasy reminder that Oedipus had just told Tisiphone to punish his sons). Since the whole chain of events was caused directly by Jupiter's lust and Juno's jealousy, it is a

most inappropriate story to exemplify men's sin and Jupiter's need to punish it. Mozley and Shackleton Bailey solve the problem by assuming that *erroresque feros nemorum* is part of *mala gaudia matrum* and refers to Agaue and the other Bacchanals. But not even I can believe that Jupiter is so incompetent a rhetorician that he would regard *mala gaudia matrum* and *erroresque feros nemorum* as a single element. Just try reading *mala … crimina* aloud with a pause only at *nemorum*! If this passage really does refer to Athamas and his family (and I am unaware of any counter suggestion apart from incorporating it with Agaue and Pentheus) it is much more plausible that Jupiter had been reading his *Metamorphoses* rather carelessly. Finally, what is to be made of *et reticenda deorum* | *crimina*? Lactantius Placidus offers this comment:

> et hoc ἀμφίβολον: aut quae homines in deos commiserunt aut quae dei irrogauere mortalibus. si hominum in deos, haec sunt: quia praetulit se in pulchritudine Niobe Latonae, Pentheus Libero, Semele Iunoni; uel propter Tantalum, qui uolens deorum mentes inquirere Pelopem filium suum diis posuit epulandum. haec enim deorum crimina. quae a Pentheo inlata sunt in Liberum, Ouidius refert.

> Also this is ambiguous: either what men have committed against the gods or what the gods have inflicted on mortals. If it is acts of men against the gods there are these: because Niobe preferred herself in beauty to Latona, Pentheus to Bacchus, Semele to Juno; or because of Tantalus who, wanting to test the minds of the gods, served his son, Pelops, to the gods at a banquet. For these were the crimes against the gods. Ovid reports what was inflicted by Pentheus upon Bacchus.

Shackleton Bailey, heavily dependent on Lactantius Placidus, writes:

> Sometimes understood as "crimes against the gods," which makes doubtful Latin and indifferent sense (with *reticenda*). Jupiter may be supposed to be thinking of his own affairs with Semele and the slaying of the Niobids and Pentheus.

However surprising it may seem to suppose that here *deorum* is an objective genitive with *crimina*, the context, as Heuvel saw, ensures that there is no other possibility. Furthermore, Lactantius was presumably a native Latin speaker and better able than we are to pronounce on whether a particular interpretation is possible or not. Jupiter cannot possibly wish, at this point, to dwell on the gods' sins against the human race or even against one another. Nor can he suddenly, as a parenthesis, be stating that the gods' sins against mankind should not

be spoken of (*reticenda*). The climax of this part of the speech, just before he passes from the general to the particular, demands a climactic denunciation of man's sinfulness. The assertion that there are unspeakable (*reticenda*) human crimes committed against the gods fits the demands of the context perfectly.

We now approach the real purpose of this hitherto rambling speech with the standard complaint that the subject's scope defeats the poet: *uix lucis spatio, uix noctis abactae* | *enumerare queam mores gentemque profanam* (1.231–2 "Scarcely in the space of a day, scarcely in the space of a spent night could I enumerate their habits and the wicked race"). Homer complained (*Il.* 2.489–91) that not with ten tongues and ten mouths could he tell of the ships that went to Troy, unless he had the Muses' help. Jupiter's claim is more modest; scarcely could he enumerate the (evil) habits of the disgusting (Theban) race in a day and a night. *uix lucis spatio, uix noctis* is clear enough. Statius himself adopts this strategy at 3–15. What is meant by *abactae*? Shackleton Bailey[4] compares Virgil's rather puzzling use of the same phrase at *A.* 8.407 to argue that what is meant is a day followed by a night with the lights on, the notion being for both poets that the night is *abacta* by the introduction of artificial light. However that may be, we are being prepared for Jupiter's real complaints against Thebes:

scandere quin etiam thalamos hic impius heres | *patris et inmeritae gremium incestare parentis* | *appetiit, proprios (monstrum!) reuolutus in ortus* (1.233–5 "But this impious heir even sought to climb into his father's bed and to violate the womb of his innocent mother returning (monstrous) to his own origin."). So, we imagine, the great Theban sin is Oedipus' incest with his mother. Oedipus' killing of his father is, for now, to be ignored. But these natural expectations are immediately frustrated: *ille tamen* "But he" (note how doubt is immediately sown in our minds) *superis aeterna piacula soluit* | *proiecitque diem, nec iam amplius aethere nostro* | *uescitur* (1.236–8 "payed an eternal penalty to the gods, and cast away the light and and he feeds on our air no longer."). No, Oedipus is not the problem because his blindness has been sufficient punishment; and we are not even going to mention his patricide. Curiously, Jupiter will eventually involve Laius, the father that Oedipus killed, in his strategy for pun-

4 Shackleton Bailey 2000, 463.

ishing Oedipus' sons (1.295–302, 2.7 etc.). Jupiter's sense of how rhetoric should work is further revealed as grossly incompetent. It is not a good idea to come to a ringing climax and then say 'not him'. Now, perhaps, we shall be told the real Theban sin: *at nati (facinus sine more!)* "But his sons (an uncivilized crime)" that sounds more like it *cadentes* | *calcauere oculos* (1.238–9 "trampled upon his falling eyes"). *'cadentes calcauere oculos'*? What is that supposed to mean? Lactantius suggests: *insultauere caecitate patris* "they insulted their father's blindness"; but even if such an interpretation were possible, it would hardly qualify as a *facinus sine more*. Heuvel interprets: *proprie intellegenda sententia optime ad Statii saeculi inclinationem horribilibus rebus laetantem quadrat* "The sentence to be literally understood squares very well with the inclination in Statius' time to enjoy horrible things." On this interpretation, Jupiter has invented a grotesque picture as a sop to the taste of Statius' contemporaries. Is there anything in the literature to support this narrative? And suppose that there were. To trample on Oedipus' eyes as they fell, or shortly after, would be tasteless in the extreme, but it would hardly qualify as one of the great sinful acts of all time, which is what the context requires. Vessey[5] constructs an elegant contrast which scarcely reflects the text:

> Oedipus, by blinding himself, had made eternal atonement for his sins, but Eteocles and Polynices, by spurning their father [a very weak rendering of *cadentes calcauere oculos*], had committed a 'facinus sine more', a monstrous crime against *pietas*.

It was indeed the conduct of his sons that had made Oedipus angry enough to invoke Tisiphone to punish them; and we have just seen Jupiter's confused account of Oedipus' sons' misconduct. Contrast his complaint with Oedipus' own characterization of his sons and their disloyalty:

> orbum uisu regnisque carentem
> non regere aut dictis maerentem flectere adorti,
> quos genui quocumque toro; quin ecce superbi
> —pro dolor!—et nostro iamdudum funere reges
> insultant tenebris gemitusque odere paternos.

5 Vessey 1973, 83.

hisne etiam funestus ego? et uidet ista deorum
ignauus genitor?

(1.74–80)

I was deprived of sight and lacking my kingdom but they, on whatever couch conceived, did not try to guide me or to soothe me with words in my sorrow. But rather, look, for shame, they proudly and though being kings now for some time because of my death, insult my blindness and hate their father's groans. Am I polluted even to them? And does the idle father of the gods see these things?

Here there is no trampling on eyes or extravagant claims that this sin was of cosmic significance. It is, instead, a set of straightforward complaints against his sons coupled with contempt for Jupiter's apparent indifference. And all this is especially interesting as we read on in Jupiter's speech:

iam iam rata uota tulisti, | *dire senex* (1.239–40 "Now, now you have brought your prayers to fulfilment, terrible old man."): this is true, but it is Tisiphone that is on her way, not what Jupiter meant. He continues: *meruere tuae, meruere tenebrae* | *ultorem sperare Iouem* (1.240–1 "Your darkness has deserved, it has deserved to expect Jupiter as an avenger."): but as recently as 1.236–8 Oedipus' blindness was seen as part of an expiation for his incest (never mind the patricide), not something for which he can claim Jupiter's vengeance. Careless, or unaware of the illogicality of his position, Jupiter blunders on: *noua sontibus arma* | *iniciam regnis* (1.241–2 "I shall cast new arms into the guilty kingdom(s)."[6]

It might be helpful to sum up where we are now. Originally, Jupiter had suggested that Argos and Thebes were descended from him and deserving of severe punishment (1.224–7). No specific sin was attributed to Argos but Thebes was to be destroyed for various sins climaxing in Oedipus' incest for which, however, he was now to be forgiven, and the punishment was to be visited on Polynices and Eteocles instead for, apparently, ill-treating their father. If we remember that originally Argos, and Thebes were to be punished we might be tempted to take *regnis* as referring to Argos and Thebes; however, Jupiter's very next words, *totumque a stirpe reuellam* | *exitiale genus* (1.242–3 "And I shall tear the whole destructive race from its stump"), strongly suggest a single race, the race of Thebes, with the plural per-

[6] See n. 7.

haps referring to the projected alternate reigns of Eteocles and Polynices.[7] He goes on:

> belli mihi semina sunto
> Adrastus socer et superis adiuncta sinistris
> conubia. hanc etiam poenis incessere gentem
> decretum; neque enim arcano de pectore fallax
> Tantalus et saeuae periit iniuria mensae.
>
> (1.243–7)

> Let the seeds of war be, for me, the father-in-law Adrastus and a marriage joined by sinister gods. It is decreed too to assail this race with punishment; for false Tantalus and the damage of his cruel banquet have not perished in my secret heart.

At last we know why Argos is to be punished; partly because Adrastus would marry his daughter to Polynices, (hardly, one would think, a cosmic offence and one which, in any case, was yet to be committed, and partly because of Tantalus' infamous banquet for the gods; but if Oedipus' much more recent offences can be expiated because of his blindness, surely Tantalus' offences can be expiated by the severity and longevity of his penalties. It is, at first sight, puzzling to see Tantalus as having any connection with Adrastus. However, according to Apollodorus again, Tantalus had a daughter, Niobe, whose boasting that she had borne more children than Latona had resulted in the death of all her children except Amphion and Chloris; Chloris married Neleus (Apollod. 3.5.6); they had a daughter, Pero (Apollod. 1.9.9), who married Bias and bore Talaus who married Lysimache and bore Adrastus (1.9.13).

Startling indeed is the contrast between the angry but rational Oedipus who succeeds in his desire to punish his sons by eliciting the help of Tisiphone and the blustering Jupiter who seems to understand little and to be doing too little too late. Commentators have seen the flaws in Jupiter's speech but have attributed them to Statius' carelessness; it is far more probable that they are to be attributed to the weakness and stupidity of Jupiter. This is, of course, problematic for the relationship between Statius and Domitian, *dominus et deus*.

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[7] But the plurality of *regnis* is probably of no consequence, see 1.74.

STATIUS IN THE *SILVAE*

Ruurd R. Nauta

In the *Silvae*, Statius tells us enough about himself to enable us to draw up a rudimentary biography. Even if we do not take into consideration the 'personal' poems in the posthumously published Book 5 (5.3–5), because we do not know whether these were intended for inclusion in the *Silvae*,[1] we are informed that Statius hailed from Naples, where he participated successfully in the poetry competitions of the Neapolitan Games, the Σεβαστά, that after his father died he inherited a small estate at Alba Longa near Rome, that he was once victorious in Domitian's Alban Games, but failed to win in the Capitoline Games, that he was known as the poet of the *Thebaid* and later the *Achilleid*, from which he gave well-attended recitations, that he was married to a Claudia, the widow of a fellow-poet, and that, feeling old and weary after a grave illness, he intended to retire to Naples, although he continued to spend time in Rome.[2] In my study of literary patronage in the time of Domitian, I evaluated these data as historical evidence, for the purpose of determining Statius' position in the patronage relationships in which he was engaged.[3] In this paper, I wish to take a more literary approach, not using the *Silvae* as a source for biographical information, but examining Statius' self-presentation as part of the utterance of his poems. One way of conceptualising such

[1] For the posthumous publication of Book 5 see Gibson 2006a, xxviii–xxx. I do take account of 5.1–2, because unlike 5.3–5 these poems are not significantly different from what is found in the books published by Statius himself.

[2] Naples: 1.2.260–5, 2.2.97, 136, 3.*ep*.20–5, 3.5, 4.*ep*.19–20, 4.5.21, 4.7.17–20, 4.8; Games: 2.2.6 (cf. n. 57); death of his father (mourned in 5.3): 2.1.33–4, 3.3.39–42; Alba: 3.1.61–4, 4.5.1–24, 4.8.39; Alban Games: 3.5.28–31, 4.2.65–7, 4.5.22–4; Capitoline Games: 3.5.31–3; *Thebaid* (apart from more general references to his epic poetry): 1.5.8, 3.2.40, 144, 3.5.36, 4.4.89, 4.7.8, 26; *Achilleid*: 4.4.94, 4.7.24, 5.2.163; recitations: 5.2.160–3; marriage: 3.*ep*.20–3, 3.5; wife widow of poet (or singer): 3.5.52, 64; illness, old age and weariness: 3.5.12–3, 24, 37–42, 4.4.70, 5.2.158–9; intended return to Naples: 3.5; in Rome: 4.1, 4.2, 4.6, 4.9, 5.1, 5.2 (in Alba: 4.5; in Rome or Alba: 4.7; in Campania: 4.*ep*., 4.4, 4.8; cf. 4.3). Line numbers in citations from the epistolary prefaces refer to the text as printed in Courtney 1990, which I use throughout, unless otherwise specified.

[3] Nauta 2002a, 195–204.

an investigation is to take it as concerned with the *personae* the poet adopts, and in what follows I shall regularly speak of 'roles' and 'role-playing' (but not of 'masks').[4] A brief but valuable survey of Statius' various *personae* in the *Silvae* has been given by Alex Hardie,[5] and my own contribution claims nothing else for itself than being more systematic and comprehensive, although the price for that, inevitably, is a certain length. I have however tried to be as succinct as possible, and have also omitted discussion of two components of the text of the *Silvae* that in themselves are highly relevant to my theme, but in different ways have a special character: the posthumously published 'personal' poems 5.3–5 mentioned above, and the prefaces to the published books (although I will occasionally use the information they provide on individual poems).[6] For reasons that will become clear, I discuss poems for the emperor separately from those for non-imperial addressees, and in the latter group organise my discussion according to the main speech act represented by the poem (consolation, congratulation, etc.). I shall, however, set apart a group of poems from Book 4 (4.4–9), which show Statius experimenting with other forms of self-presentation than he had used theretofore.

Poems honouring the emperor

The first poem in the *Silvae*, on the colossal equestrian statue of Domitian erected in the Forum,[7] will serve as a good introduction to Statius' self-presentation in the majority of the imperial poems. In the preface to Book 1, Statius declares that he had dared to offer the poem to the emperor on the day following that on which the statue had been dedicated (1.*ep.*18–9), which implies that the poem had played no ceremonial role. Yet even without a ceremony we find ceremonial speech: the poet repeatedly addresses both an audience (17, 87–8) and the emperor or his statue (5, 25–40, 94–107), and at the end he even offers the statue to the emperor in the name of the senate and people of Rome: "Enjoy for ever the gift of the people and the great senate"

[4] Cf. Nauta 2002b.

[5] See Hardie 1983, 138–45. More recently Statius' authority in the *Silvae* has been discussed by Zeiner 2005, esp. 45–54, 72–4; it would lead too far afield to engage with her (Bourdieuian) approach here, but I hope to do so elsewhere.

[6] On the prefaces see now Johannsen 2006.

[7] On this poem see the contribution of Dewar to this volume.

(99–100). A few lines later he speaks of the "sanctuaries that we dedicate to you" (105), where the word "sanctuaries" (*templa*) doubtless includes the present statue. The use of "we" here at the conclusion of the poem harks back to the beginning, where Statius had asked whether the statue had been fashioned by Domitian's favourite deity Minerva in order that "we" could see Domitian in the guise in which he had recently appeared to the peoples he had conquered (5–7).[8] Statius thus acts as the representative of a wider collectivity, implying that what he says rests on a universal consensus. Of course what he says does indeed rest, if not on an actual, at least on an officially assumed consensus, and for that reason he can speak with confidence and authority. A good example is his interpretation of the difference in size between Domitian's mount and that of Julius Caesar in the nearby Forum Julium, which he takes as iconic of the relative merits of the two riders (84–90). He also draws a similar comparison with another horse: the Trojan Horse celebrated by *fama prior*, "earlier fame" or "old tradition",[9] and more particularly, as Statius' allusions acknowledge, by Virgil in the *Aeneid* (8–16). This points to another source of Statius' authority: his being a poet, and more particularly an epic poet.

Although the poem does not have an invocation to the Muses or other inspiring deities (which presumably would create a conflict of hierarchy between them and the Emperor),[10] it does present its poetic credentials from the beginning. The speaker starts off with visions of the world of the gods and apostrophes to Domitian (5) and *fama* (8), thus establishing that this text is no poetic representation of ordinary speech, but an instance of poetic speech.[11] Moreover, the literal 'greatness' of the theme, introduced in the first verse ("What mass, doubled by the colossus placed upon it, …?"), the reference to the

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[8] Statius also uses the first person plural in a more casual way at 24, when he speaks of the deified emperors as "our gods".

[9] These are the translations of Shackleton Bailey 2003 and Nagle 2004, respectively. Unattributed translations of quotations incorporated in the running text are my own; translations of quotations set off from the text are from Shackleton Bailey 2003.

[10] No other imperial poem in the *Silvae* has an invocation of inspiring deities, except the Saturnalian 1.6, on which see below. In 5.1.13–5 Domitian is himself an inspiring deity, alongside Apollo, in a poem for one of his most important freedmen. On the emperor and the Muses in Statius see Rosati 2002.

[11] Because there is no real ceremonial setting, the address to Domitian, no less than that to *fama*, may be called 'apostrophe'. On apostrophe as undermining the construction of poetry as the representation of ordinary speech, see the classic article by Culler 1981 (as well as Culler 1985, 38–41 and Culler 1997, 75–9).

Trojan Horse (8–16) and the subsequent evocation of the steed of Mars (18–22) set up the poet as a master of epic (which Statius, author of the *Thebaid*, indeed was).[12] Such a poet may without incongruity call up mythological or quasi-mythological characters, as Statius does with the legendary hero Curtius, to whom he attributes an awed address to Domitian (74–83). This enlisting of divine or quasi-divine authority, as Kathleen Coleman has well shown, significantly enlarges the range of the praise that the poet may utter.[13] The claims for that praise are formulated towards the end of the poem (91–4), where Statius predicts longevity for the statue in words that allude to those in which Horace (*Carm.* 3.30) and Ovid (*Met.* 15.871–9) assert the immortality of their poetry, in the case of Horace in explicit contrast with bronze statues and regal monuments. In this manner Statius suggests that his poem may even outlive Domitian's statue (as indeed it has, for the statue shared the fate of most depictions of Domitian and was demolished after his death). So from the beginning to the end of the poem, Statius presents himself not only as a representative spokesman for the Roman community, but also as a powerful poet. In the one identity he is like all others, in the other he is unique, but in neither is it fitting to mention personal details, and such details are consequently not to be found in the poem.

In many ways similar to *Silvae* 1.1 is the next imperial poem in the collection, the concluding poem of Book 1, *Silvae* 1.6. The topic is a day and a night of entertainments in the Amphitheatrum Flavium (the Colosseum) offered by Domitian to the populace on the first day of December, the *Kalendae Decembres*. The preface to Book 1 breaks off at the point where Statius is about to specify how he composed this poem (1.*ep.*30–2), and editors often supplement the text to say that Statius recited the poem in the amphitheatre itself, but for various

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12 On epic elements in *Silv.* 1.1 see Gibson 2006b, 169–70; Nauta 2006, 36.

13 Coleman 1999 (67–70 on the speech of Curtius). I doubt, however, whether Coleman is right in arguing that the technique gives the poet access to a higher level of *language* than he would otherwise command. She suggests e.g. that Curtius' terms *genitor* and *proles* could not have been employed by Statius *in propria persona* (69–70), but in fact they often are (in 5.3 Statius addresses his own father twice as *pater*, but five times as *genitor*), and similar remarks could be made of her other instances. "Statius' own voice" is not just "the voice of a social and political non-entity" (74), but also the voice of a poet.

reasons this is highly improbable.[14] Again, we have no ceremony, but the fiction of ceremonial recitation: Statius describes the events as they unfold, sometimes addressing Domitian (46–8, 96), but he alternates present tenses and words like “look” (28 *ecce*) with past tenses, which shows that the text was composed after the event. The clearest indication of this comes at the end, where Statius mentions that he falls into a drunken stupor (96–7), but after that is sufficiently sober and awake to add another five lines. Statius’ inebriation may seem an individualising detail,[15] but it is quite the contrary: it marks him as an ideal subject, behaving in perfect accordance with the occasion, which is defined at the beginning of the poem as “a happy day and a drunken ?night” (7–8).[16] Even where Statius appears as an ‘I’, he is representative of the ‘we’ in whose name he speaks elsewhere in the poem (27, 48).

Unlike 1.1, this poem begins with an invocation of inspiring deities, but Statius avoids a conflict of authority between these and Domitian by determining the subject of the poem not as the emperor himself, but as a merry festival, a kind of Saturnalia (which was celebrated later in December). This licenses him to play with the conventions: he sends Phoebus, stern Pallas and the Muses on holiday, and in their place invokes Saturn (the presiding deity of the Saturnalia) and the cheerfully deified December, Fun (*Iocus*) and Jokes (*Sales*). But he adds that on the first of January, when the festive season is over, he will resume his customary poetic work, which—as he must assume his audience to know—was the composition of the *Thebaid*.[17] But even in his present lighter vein, his aim is to “relate” (7 *dum refero*) and to “sing” (93–5 *quis … canat …?*), and he is still a master of tradition: in the same way that he defies *prior fama* in 1.1, here he challenges *Vetustas*, “Antiquity”, to compare the Golden Age under the reign of

[14] Vollmer 1898, 213; Frère 1961, 1.13; Nagle 2004, 36, 185; but see Nauta 2002a, 362–3.

[15] Newlands 2002, 255 even reads it as a sign of Statius’ self-assertion with respect to the emperor: according to her, “the poet draws the line … He decides what and when is enough.”

[16] The word I have represented by “?night” has been corrupted in the transmission, and may have been something meaning “feast”, but what matters is that *ebriam* (8) recurs in *ebrius* (97), and that Statius’ ebriety is an appropriate response to the *largi flumina … Lyaei* mentioned immediately before (95).

[17] At the date of the poem, the *Thebaid* was probably not yet published, but Statius’ recitations from his work in progress were exceedingly popular, according to Juvenal (7.82–7).

Saturn with the Saturnalia now celebrated by Domitian (39–42). And also similarly to what happens in 1.1, the closural assurance of enduring fame for the day (98–102) recalls Virgil's claim of immortalising those he sings (*A.* 9.446–9), so that the suggestion is made that it is Statius' poem itself that bestows that fame.[18]

The next imperial poem, *Silvae* 2.5, is likewise set in the amphitheatre, but in this case we do have the text of Statius' preface, in which he says that he handed it to the emperor immediately after the event it commemorates (2.*ep.*16–8). This presumably means that he offered the poem when still in the amphitheatre, but again it is improbable that he recited there. The poem consoles Domitian for the loss of a lion that was unexpectedly killed, but avoids presumptuousness by overtly consoling not the emperor, but the lion, by telling it that the emperor mourned its death (27–30).[19] Statius adds that Domitian's sorrow was shared by the people and the senators (25), which of course includes himself, so that he again acts as the spokesperson of the community. He does not appear as an individual at all, but he does manifest himself as a poet from the very first line, by using the figure of apostrophe.

Of the three imperial poems that open Book 4, two (4.1 and 4.3) conform more or less to the pattern of the earlier books, although Statius makes more extensive use of the figure of the mythological spokesperson. In 4.1, on Domitian's seventeenth consulate, the poet starts off by exhorting the laws and magistracies and the entire City of Rome to rejoice, and by apostrophising Domitian (13), but soon the god Janus takes over, whose speech fills out the poem almost to its end: it is Janus who now addresses the emperor, challenges *Vetustas* (28–34) to produce historic precedent, and acts as a representative of all the orders in Rome (25–7, 34–7); the poet reappears only to confirm, in a renewed apostrophe to Domitian (46), that Janus' good wishes have been ratified by the other gods and especially by Jupiter himself. In 4.3, on the Via Domitiana constructed by the emperor in Campania, Statius employs two mythological spokespersons: first the river Volturnus, who praises Domitian for canalising and bridging him, and then the Cumaean Sibyl of Cumae. In introducing the latter,

[18] Cf. Gibson 2006b, 167. A similar use of the passage in Virgil, as well as of Hor. *Carm.* 3.30, is to be found at the end of a further imperial poem, *Silv.* 4.3: see Coleman 1988, 134–5 *ad* 160–1; Smolenaars 2006, 242–4.

[19] Statius explicitly uses the word *solacia* (24); cf. below, n. 40.

Statius elaborately stages himself; in paraphrase: "But whom do I behold down the road at Cumae? Do my eyes deceive me or is it really the Sibyl? Lyre, put aside your song: a holier bard (*uates*) begins" (114–20)—and then the remainder of the poem is taken up by the Sibyl's song. Statius puts himself into the foreground only in his quasi-ceremonial role, using the fiction of lyre-play and song to indicate that he fulfils this role as an inspired poet, a *uates*. It is true that Statius, as someone who regularly travelled between Rome and Naples, profited by the new road; in the preface to Book 4 he writes that a poetic letter he has written from Naples (*Silv.* 4.4) will now take less long to deliver (4.*ep.*7–10). But the imperial *beneficium* (4.*ep.*8) was given to the population at large, not to Statius personally, and for that reason he does not individualise himself otherwise than as a praise poet.

The situation is different in *Silvae* 4.2, which celebrates a banquet given by Domitian to senators and knights (32–3) in the newly erected imperial palace on the Palatine, which is enthusiastically described (18–31).[20] At the beginning of the poem Statius presents himself as playing the lyre (7), comparing himself to Virgil and Homer, who praised and commemorated the feasts of Dido and Alcinous. This comparison implies that the poem was not delivered at the event itself, but composed afterwards,[21] as a few past tenses also indicate. Mostly, however, Statius uses present tenses, and throughout he apostrophises Domitian, thus recreating the situation before his own eyes and those of his audience. In 1.6, which also shows Statius among the public at a festive gathering, he juxtaposed the emperor's 'you' with a 'we': "and you … have joined us for a common meal" (1.6.46–8). Now the 'we' is replaced by an 'I': "Is it you I behold… as I recline?" (14–6). Statius continues to speak in the singular (38–40, 52), and concludes by stating that this day makes him as happy as the one on which he received the crown at the Alban Games for a poem on Domitian's victories (63–7). That is of course a reference to his identity as a praise poet, but also a specific autobiographical detail. The reason for this more individualised self-presentation must be that the poem is a thanksgiving, as Statius states both in the preface to Book 4 (6–7) and

[20] For a recent (and different) discussion of *Silv.* 4.2 see Malamud 2007.

[21] Although it must be admitted that the comparison is any case not precise, because unlike Homer and Virgil, Statius was himself present at the meal he celebrates.

in the text of the poem itself (7).[22] Because Statius was neither a senator nor (presumably) a knight, the invitation was indeed a singular honour, granted to Statius individually, and this obliged him to reciprocate not only as a representative subject, but also as an individual.

Poems honouring non-imperial addressees

When addressing others than the emperor, the role of subject is not available, and Statius must employ another role to give his utterance legitimacy. In most cases this will be the role of *amicus*, which means that Statius writes from the position of one who has a personal relationship with the addresssee. At the same time, Statius is always the social inferior of his addressee, and the *amicitia* between them is of a type that sociologists call 'patronage'.[23] The non-imperial poem in which *amicitia* is least in evidence is at the same time the one that is closest to the imperial poems, *Silvae* 3.4 on the locks of Domitian's favourite Earinus. In the preface to Book 3 Statius writes: "Earinus ... knows how long I have delayed complying with his wish, when he asked me write a dedication in verse for his hairs, which he was sending … to Asclepius in Pergamum [which appears from the poem to have been Earinus' birthplace]" (3.*ep.*16–20). Statius' words seem to imply that the poem was written after the ceremony, but in the poem itself he assumes a quasi-ceremonial role, apostrophising the hairs, Asclepius, Pergamum and Earinus himself. But there is no sense of a personal relationship, and the commission mentioned in the preface shows that Statius did not in any case write on his own initiative. The only feature suggestive of *amicitia* is that in the fictive situation Statius has to be thought of as being present at the ceremony, which was typically one to be celebrated in the company of one's *amici*.[24] This use of an occasion where *amici* gathered connects the poem for Earinus with those for non-imperial addressees, where it is always such an occasion which provides the real or fictive context of utterance. In the imperial poems Statius could only react to monuments and festivities,

[22] Moreover, the title categorises the poem as an *eucharisticon*, but most scholars believe the titles to have been added by a later hand.
[23] On *amicitia* and patronage cf. Nauta 2002a, 14–26.
[24] See Juv. 3.186–9. Similarly Petr. 73.6, on the first cutting of the beard (which in Earinus' case would have accompanied the first cutting of the hair if he had not been a eunuch: 78–82).

but in the non-imperial poems he could use a far greater variety of situations in which he and his addressees participated together.

The soteria for Rutilius Gallicus

The importance of *amicitia* is thematised by Statius a number of times, most interestingly perhaps in the poem on the recovery from illness of Rutilius Gallicus (1.4), which is otherwise close to the imperial poems, because Gallicus was *praefectus Vrbi* and as such the deputy of the Emperor in the City of Rome. The poet starts off with excited apostrophes to the gods and Domitian, commands *fama* to be silent (14)—although this time not *fama* in the sense of the poetical tradition, but of rumours about Gallicus' health— and rejects his customary inspiring deities in favour of a more appropriate one, in this case the addressee himself: *ipse ueni uiresque nouas animumque ministra / qui caneris*, "come yourself and grant new forces and spirit, you whom I sing" (22–3). The wording here recalls well-known invocations of the emperor (or his intended successor) in earlier poetry, and thus serves to associate Gallicus with the emperor.[25] This association is continued in the immediately following lines, where Statius describes the solicitude, during Gallicus' illness, of the entire City, senators, knights and *plebs* (38–40), thus invoking the same universal consensus as in the imperial poems. After a mythological story about Gallicus' recovery, in which a career review is put into the mouth of Apollo, Statius returns to the theme of consensus, but now he also brings in himself (115–20):

> quis mihi tot coetus inter populique patrumque
> sit curae uotique locus? tamen ardua testor
> sidera teque, pater uatum Thymbraee, quis omni

[25] Cf. Manil. 1.9–10 *ipse …, / das animum uiresque facis ad tanta canenda* (to Augustus); Ov. *F.* 1.17 *dederis in carmina uires* (to Germanicus); Luc. 1.66 *tu satis ad uires Romana in carmina dandas* (to Nero); in Lucan Apollo and Bacchus are rejected (64–5) as Apollo, the Muses, Mercury and Bacchus are in Statius (16–8). *Silv.* 5.3 applies the formula to Statius' father: *Ipse malas uires et lamentabile carmen / … / da* (1–3), and continues to reject Apollo and Bacchus, likewise as in Lucan. The invocation of the addressee in the *Laus Pisonis* is similar to what Statius does in 1.4, but more restrained through the substitution of *fauor* and *spes* for the patron himself, and through the connection with future efforts rather than the present poem: *forsan meliora canemus / et uires dabit ipse fauor, dabit ipsa feracem / spes animum* (216–7).

luce mihi, quis nocte timor, dum postibus haerens
adsiduus nunc aure uigil, nunc lumine cuncta
aucupor

Amid so many gatherings of Fathers and people what room for anxious prayers of mine? Yet I call the stars on high and you, Thymbraean, father of poets [Apollo], to witness how I spent every day and night in terror, ever clinging to the doorway, watchful to pick up every hint now with eye, now with ear (tr. SB)[26]

Statius is concerned to explain what room, or more literally what place (*locus*) there is for him, from what position he may speak. In spite of Gallicus' importance to the City of Rome, it is not sufficient to be a loyal subject, and for that reason Statius suggests that he has a personal relationship with his addressee, visiting his house and being greatly concerned for his welfare. But apparently he is not let into the house, and if he is an *amicus* at all, he is clearly a client, whose typical habitat is precisely the vestibule of a great house, where he is waiting for admission.[27] But he is also a poet, who has Apollo, the *pater uatum*, testify for him. The same combination of being a client and being a poet recurs at the end of the poem (127–31):

qua nunc tibi pauper acerra
digna litem? nec si uacuet Meuania ualles
aut praestent niueos Clitumna noualia tauros
sufficiam. sed saepe deis hos inter honores
caespes et exiguo placuerunt farra salino.

Poor man that I am, how find a censer to make worthy offering on your behalf? Not though Mevania make void her vales or Clitumnus' acres supply their snowy bulls would I have enough. Yet often among such tributes has a sod of earth with meal and tiny saltcellar found favour with the gods. (tr. SB)

Statius' calling himself *pauper* defines him as a client with respect to Gallicus, but the contrast of the sacrifice of a great number of bulls with that of incense, meal and salt is at home in meta-poetical texts in which the poet contrasts the capacities of others to praise in the grand style with his own more modest contribution.[28] Statius is again assert-

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[26] "tr. SB" here as elsewhere indicates that the translation is taken from Shackleton Bailey 2003.
[27] Cf. Juv. 1.132, with Courtney's commentary.
[28] See esp. Hor. *Carm.* 4.2.53–60 (ten bulls and cows *vs.* a single calf); [Tib.] 3.7.14–5 (a bull *vs.* salt); Prop. 2.10.24 (unspecified *vs.* incense); Ov. *Tr.* 2.73–6 (one

ing his identity as a poet, here stressing, in the tradition of the so-called *recusatio*, that he writes in a smaller genre than full epic encomium.[29] But the implied comparison is not only with the production of other poets praising Gallicus, but also with the poetry of Gallicus himself, which Statius characterises, in terms likewise deriving from the *recusatio*, as grand and sublime (34–5), while his own is said to be performed on a 'slighter lyre' (36 *tenuiore lyra*).[30] It seems quite possible that the poetic identity Statius shares with Gallicus is used to gloss over a lack of true *amicitia*.

The epithalamium for Arruntius Stella

The poem on the wedding of the young senator and well-known love poet Arruntius Stella with Violentilla, the woman he had sung in his elegies (1.2), is in many ways similar to that on the recovery of Rutilius Gallicus. It begins with a vision of a procession of gods (with apostrophe), and then explains the situation: it is Stella's wedding day. The poet goes on to silence *fama* (28), here again in the sense of rumour, and to pray to an inspiring deity, in this case the Muse Erato, whose name fits her for the theme of love. A mythological story on the *causa* (46) of the wedding follows, in which the praises of bride and groom are uttered by mythological spokespersons, in this case Venus and Amor; at the end Statius explains his own *canendi / causa* (255–6), and concludes with good wishes. But differently from 1.4, the poet here stages himself in a ceremonial role on the day itself, giving information and issuing orders. He first comes forward when he answers his own question for whom the gods are singing (16–7):

> nosco diem causasque sacri: te concinit iste
> (pande fores), te, Stella, chorus
>
> I learn the day and the reason for the ceremony. It is you, Stella, you that choir (fling wide the gates!) is singing. (tr. SB)

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hundred bulls *vs.* incense). The passage also echoes other, less emphatically meta-poetical material, mainly from Horace (see Henderson 1998a, 101 with 139, n. 224).

[29] On *recusatio* in the *Silvae* see Nauta 2006, 34–7 (where 1.4 is not discussed).

[30] See further below, 168. The comparison of Statius' attachment to Gallicus to a small *cumba* tied to a large ship in lines 120–2 (quoted by van Dam in this volume, 58) may also be read in this vein, as evoking the meta-poetical *cumbae* in such texts as Prop. 3.3.22; Ov. *Ars* 3.26, *Tr.* 2.330 (and cf. Statius himself at 4.4.99–100).

After further apostrophe to Stella, reassuring and encouraging him, Statius takes up a position in the house from which he may tell his story (46–50); when this is finished, he calls upon other poets, but especially Stella's elegiac colleagues, to sing (247–55), and concludes with exhorting the bridal pair to produce children (266–7).

This presentation of the relationship between poet and addressee significantly contrasts with the reality, as Statius specifies it in the preface to Book 1, where he tells Stella: "you know that your epithalamium, which you had enjoined upon me, was written in two days" (1.*ep.*21–2). Whereas in the preface it is Stella who gives orders to Statius, in accordance with the social asymmetry obtaining between them, in the poem it is Statius who is in charge, wielding an authority that can only accrue to him in his capacity as a poet. Moreover, whereas the preface is explicit about the written nature of the poem, in the poem itself all reference to writing is avoided, and we have only singing and lyre-playing by poets both human and divine.[31] As we shall see, this is typical of the *Silvae* (apart from some poems in Book 4):[32] Statius combines his description of the modern Roman world in which his addressees move with the fiction of a more archaic and more Greek world, in which the elite, at certain ceremonial occasions, would be entertained and instructed by the performances of poets.[33] Yet even within this fiction, Statius still feels the need to explain what right he has to assume a ceremonial role at this wedding. Because an appeal to Stella's request might undermine his authority, he adduces a personal relationship: "as for me, surely it is not one love and a single cause for song that moves me" (256–7), where the word "love" (*amor*) suggests *amicitia*. But the double motivation turns out to amount to no more than the circumstance that Stella is a poet like him

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[31] See 1–6 and 16–7 (Apollo and the Muses), 46ff. (Statius, inspired by the Muse Erato), 95–102 and 197–9 (Stella), 219–28 (Apollo), 237–9 (Hymen), 241 (Stella), 248–50 (various poets), 256–7 (Statius).

[32] On the avoidance of references to writing in the *Silvae* see Coleman in this volume, 29–30. I would only dispute her claim that this avoidance extends to the prefaces, which I see, on the contrary, as consciously reinstating the written nature of the poems, not only in using the verb *scribere* itself (1.*ep.*21–2, 2.*ep.*11, 16, 20, 4.*ep.*10) or its compounds (1.*ep.*26), but also verbs like *tradere* (1.*ep.*19, 2.*ep.*3, 18), *dare* (1.*ep.*11, 2.*ep.*11, 4.*ep.*28) or *recipere* (1.*ep.*30), which imply the handing over of a manuscript, and in calling the individual poems *libelli* (1.*ep.*2, 16, 27, 2.*ep.*15, 3.*ep.*2, 11, 23) or *opuscula* (2.*ep.*3, 4.*ep.*23).

[33] The technique is also at home in Augustan praise poetry, especially the *Odes* of Horace, but I cannot go into that here.

and Violentilla a Neapolitan like him. The reference to his birthplace introduces an autobiographical element, but hardly personalises the relationship. In Statius' *amicitia* with Stella, poetry seems the dominant element, as is neatly brought out by the ambiguity with which Statius addresses his fellow-poet as *dulcis … uates*, "sweet bard" (33): "sweet" because dear to Statius—which would be in accordance with *Stella carissime*, "dearest Stella", in the preface (1.*ep.*20)—, or "sweet" because a poet, and more particularly a love poet?[34] Statius intertwines the roles of *amicus* sharing in the life of *amicus* and that of *uates* celebrating *uates*.[35]

The propemptica

In poems sending off someone on a voyage overseas, expressions of affection are conventionally prominent, and Statius' two exercises in the genre are no exception. In *Silvae* 3.2, on the departure of the young senator Maecius Celer for a command in the East, Statius immediately sets the tone by qualifying his addressee as "the larger part of my soul" (7–8), thus even bettering Horace in his famous propempticon for Virgil, who had been content to call his fellow-poet "half of my soul" (*Carm.* 1.3.8). Throughout the poem Statius emphasises his great concern for Celer, mostly in rather general terms, twice using the term *amor* (81, 99), but occasionally he becomes more specific. One such moment occurs when he reproaches himself for not accompanying Celer abroad, so as to be able to stand by the banners of his *rex*, his "king" (90–4). The word *rex* is typical for the language of clients speaking to or of their patron, and Statius' use of it here rather starkly defines his *amicitia* with Celer as patronage.[36] Statius adds that, if he had indeed gone along, he would have admired Celer's exploits, but

[34] The adjective recurs another seven times in the poem, always in connection with the erotic and nuptial theme (12, 63, 74, 112, 207, 211, 261), and once additionally in close association with Violentilla's and Statius' birthplace Naples (261 *Parthenope, dulcisque solo tu gloria nostro*, with an allusion to Verg. *G.* 4.563–4 that we shall find more often: see below, 156 and 165–7). For *dulcis* as a term of affection cf. *Polli dulcissime* (3.*ep.*1).

[35] Statius calls Stella *uates* seven times (23, 46, 94, 98, 197, 201, 239; cf. also 220). He does not explicitly call himself *uates* in this poem, but he frequently does so elsewhere (as we have already seen in the case of 4.3.120 and 1.4.117), and his entire stance is 'vatic'. On Statius as *uates* cf. Lovatt 2007, 146–8.

[36] On *rex* see Nauta 2002a, 16–7.

not have shared in them, and compares himself in this imaginary role to Phoenix, Achilles' old teacher (94–9), thus alluding not only to his unwarlike profession, but also to his age.

As we have by now come to expect, Statius consistently presents himself as a poet, and more specifically as a performer, lyre in hand. When praying to the gods of the sea for safe passage for Celer, he works in an address to Palaemon, who before his divinisation had been a Theban prince, and this enables him to motivate his request by adducing that he sings of Thebes "with no degenerate plectrum" (40–1). And when anticipating, towards the end of the poem, Celer's return from overseas, Statius imagines that he will immediately strike up the lyre (131–2). Statius then further imagines how they will enquire after each other's vicissitudes during the time of their separation, and supposes that Celer will tell of his visits to the Euphrates and other Oriental sites, whereas he himself will report how he will have finished the *Thebaid* (136–43). The mention of the Euphrates a few lines before the end, together with the periphrastic description of the poet's own works, clearly evokes the conclusion of the *Georgics*, where Octavian's wars in the East are juxtaposed with Virgil's composition of the *Georgics* and the *Bucolics* in peaceful Naples.[37] Statius does not explicitly mention his birthplace in this poem, but the setting is at the nearby port of Puteoli (modern Pozzuoli) (21–4). So it seems as if, in the affectionate communication with his *amicus*, Statius' identity as a poet acquires some autobiographical contours: those of an elderly man, preferring to devote himself to the "studies of inglorious quiet" in Naples.

Silvae 5.2, in praise of Crispinus, a senatorial youth, son of the renowned general Vettius Bolanus, is not a full propempticon, but uses elements of the genre. The imagined situation is that Crispinus is about to depart on a holiday trip to Tuscany, which fills Statius with presentiments of a longer and more dangerous voyage, because it is to be expected that Crispinus will soon receive his first military appointment; at the end of the poem a messenger from the emperor ar-

[37] Both final sections comprise eight lines, but Statius has not gone so far in his imitation as to mention the Euphrates exactly in the sixth line from the end, as Virgil did in allusion to Callimachus (cf. Thomas and Scodel 1984, republished in Thomas 1999, 320). Whereas Virgil ends by invoking the beginning of his first work (*Tityre, te patulae cecini sub tegmine fagi*), Statius ends with the anticipated end of the work he is just now finishing (*quaeue laboratas claudat mihi pagina Thebas*).

rives bringing precisely this appointment. This allows Statius to play on the double meaning of *uates* as ‘poet’ and ‘seer’: prophesying a splendid career for Crispinus, Statius writes: “the omens of *uates* [plural] are not in vain” (164–5), and when the messenger arrives he exclaims: “Surely I said: ‘The auguries of *uates* are not in vain’” (173–4).[38] Again, Statius is first of all a poet, and it is as a poet that he will miss Crispinus: when he will recite from the *Achilleid* (to which he has now moved, after completing the *Thebaid*), he will not see Crispinus in the audience (160–3). But he also states, more explicitly than in 3.2, that he is too old to accompany his young friend (158–9), and casts himself as admiring spectator of the latter’s equestrian exercises (113–24). Appeal to autopsy is a standard panegyrical technique, adding credibility,[39] but here it also serves to draw a picture of Statius himself and to demonstrate that his relationship to his *amicus* (5) is not merely patronage.

The consolations

Four poems (2.1, 2.6, 3.3 and 5.1) console the addressee on the loss of a dear one; Statius himself calls these poems *consolatio*, *solamen* or *solacium*, or describes their contents as *solacia*.[40] In addition, there are two poems in which he attempts to console himself: 5.3, on the death of his father, and 5.5 (unfinished or incompletely transmitted), on the death of a beloved slave boy; these poems were included in the posthumously published Book 5, but because we cannot be sure whether Statius intended them as part of the *Silvae*, they will not be discussed here.[41] Three further poems, all from Book 2, are also of a more or less consolatory character. *Silvae* 2.5, on the death of a lion in the amphitheatre, has already been discussed in the context of the imperial poems.[42] *Silvae* 2.4 is a consolation on the death of a parrot, whereas

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38 Statius’ *dicebam* here is similar to that of the Sibyl in *Silv*. 4.3.124, who is *uates sanctior* in comparison to Statius (120).

39 Cf. Gibson 2006a, 232 *ad* l. 113.

40 *Consolatio*: 2.*ep.*20 (of 2.6); *solamen*: 2.1.1; *solacium*: 3.*ep.*15 (of 3.3); *solacia*: 2.*ep.*8 (of 2.1), 3.3.31, 5.1.3. Statius also uses the term *epicedion* (2.*ep.*8, of 2.1), and this term occurs in the titles of 5.1, 5.3. and 5.5, but the publication of Book 5 being posthumous (cf. n. 1), the authenticity of these titles is even more uncertain than that of those in the other books (cf. n. 22).

41 Cf. above, 144.

42 Cf. above, 148. Note *solacia* (24).

2.7 consoles Argentaria Polla, the widow of Lucan, in the context of a celebration of the recurrence of her former husband's birthday; these two poems will receive some brief consideration at the end of this section.

Two of the consolations are concerned with important imperial freedmen, heads of Palatine *bureaux*, but in the one case the freedman is the deceased, in the other the bereaved. *Silvae* 3.3 consoles the equestrian Claudius Etruscus, who is also the addressee of *Silvae* 1.5, on the death of his father, who had been *a rationibus*, i.e. head of the department of finance. In *Silvae* 5.1, Flavius Abascantus, Domitian's *ab epistulis*, in charge of the imperial correspondence, is consoled on the death of his wife Priscilla. For the latter poem we have the original covering letter, which was included by the editor of Book 5 to compensate for the absence of a preface to the book a a whole. In this letter Statius explains, using the verb *amare* (5.1.*ep*.6–7), that Priscilla had been close to his wife, and that her death has provided him with an unsought-for opportunity to strengthen his friendship with Abascantus; he again uses the verb *amare* (10), as well as the noun *amicitia* (11). Elsewhere in the *Silvae* Statius likewise describes consolation as a duty towards *amici*: in the poem on the death of his own slave-boy, after recalling that he has often consoled others, he now asks for reciprocation (5.5.43–5):

> nunc tempus, amici,
> quorum ego manantes oculos et saucia tersi
> pectora: reddite opem, saeuas exsoluite grates.

> Now is the time, friends, whose streaming eyes and wounded breasts I stanched: return my help, pay the cruel debt of gratitude. (tr. SB)

In the poem for Abascantus, the *amicitia* between him and Statius is implied by the familiarity Statius displays with Abascantus' marriage and his mourning, but is not stressed, and the link between Abascantus and Statius through their wives is not even mentioned. The reason may be that too much attention to the workings of *amicitia* might have exposed too clearly the claim Abascantus had on a service from Statius, whereas now Statius motivates his poem entirely from Abascantus' exemplary behaviour: *egregia pietate meretur*, "he deserves it by his extraordinary devotion" (4). Similarly, in the poem for Claudius Etruscus Statius' friendship is only implied by his eyewitness account of Etruscus' grief (176 *uidi*), but the motivation given in the poem for

the writing of a consolation is that Etruscus deserved it by his *pietas*.[43] This is also formulated in the preface to Book 3: *merebatur et Claudi Etrusci mei pietas aliquod ex studiis nostris solacium*, "also, the devotion of my friend Claudius Etruscus deserved some consolation from my pursuits" (3.*ep.*14–5). The addition *ex studiis nostris* suggests that Statius, as someone whose *studia* are poetry, has at his disposal a poetic repertory, on which he may draw to fulfil his social obligations.

The poetic character of Statius' consolations is apparent from the poetic manner of speaking (apostrophes, etc.), but is also thematised in the texts themselves. Both in the consolation for Etruscus and in that for Abascantus, Statius compares his poem to funerary offerings such as incense and spices and to funerary monuments such as paintings and sculptures, and even the grave itself, stressing that his gift, though less costly, is more durable.[44] This imagery regards not so much the consolatory character of the poems as their commemorative one, linked to the presence, in Statius' consolations, of extensive laudations of the deceased (and in the case of the poem for Abascantus of the mourner as well). The consolatory character itself is connected with another, more dynamic, set of images, that of the poet singing and playing his lyre.[45] The most elaborate use of this imagery is to be found in Statius' long consolation for Atedius Melior on the death of his young freedman Glaucias (2.1). The fiction is that the poet is present at the pyre, attempting to play his lyre and sing—but Melior is still too distracted to be able to listen (1–13). Then the poet asks again, as a friend (16 *preces amicas*). May he sing now? (17 *iamne canam?*) He himself is weeping, and tears blot out the words he is writing (17–8)—a rare disruption of the fiction of oral performance.[46] He then again stresses his own presence at the funeral (19–25) and his own sorrow: he has cast off his ceremonial fillets and garlands, and is beating his breast with lyre reversed (26–8):[47] as a friend, he shares in Melior's sorrow, and so he needs not only to overcome the resistance

[43] Evocation to *Pietas* (1), *dabimus solacia dignis / luctibus* (31–2), *pietas me poscit Etrusci / … carmina* (173–4), *nostra … exemplo meritus … carmina* (215).

[44] *Silv.* 3.3.31–9, 215–6, 5.1.1–15.

[45] *Silv.* 3.3.41, 172–6, 215, 5.1.12–5, 135–6.

[46] On this passage see Coleman in this volume, 30.

[47] Vollmer 1898, 321 and van Dam 1984, 88 *ad* 27–8 *uersa … lyra* rightly point to the custom of reversing various objects (*fasces*, torches, etc.) in funerary contexts, but I see also a reference to the expression *stilum uertere* (cf. Cic. *Ver.* 2.101; Hor. *S.* 1.10.72), with renewed conflation of the oral and the written.

of his addressee, but also to get the better of his own emotions, in order to be able to begin.[48] Of course, he has been beginning from the start (3 *ordiar*), and in not being able to begin has begun, and has in fact already absolved the introduction, so that he may now pass straight to the laudation, which he does by again stressing the difficulty of beginning: for a long time he has been searching for a beginning of his praises (36–7 *laudum … primordia*). He is torn in different directions because he has known the boy so well, and in what follows he makes it clear that his praises stem from his own observation. This again shows his familiarity with Melior, as does the following part on Glaucias' illness, death and burial, about which Statius reports as an eyewitness. And so he may turn the consolation into a partial self-consolation, writing of Glaucias "him whom we bemoan" (220 *hic quem gemimus*).

In the other consolatory poems in Book 2, which are considerably briefer, friendship and poetry are variously present. *Silvae* 2.4 is again written for Atedius Melior, and mourns the death of his favourite parrot. This poem may be called a parody (as long as one does not take the term to imply criticism of what is parodied):[49] the poet starts off with apostrophe to the bird, challenges the tradition (9–10 *cedat … uulgi / fabula*), and assumes a ceremonial role by instructing the other birds to sing a dirge. But he also recalls that but yesterday he had watched the parrot at play at Melior's board (4–7), and thus he not only advertises his friendship with Melior, but also provides a fittingly light-hearted symposiastic context.[50]

After the imperial poem 2.5, follows the consolation to Flavius Ursus on the loss of a slave boy, where, as in the similar poem to Melior, Statius presents himself both as a singer (29, 50) and an eyewitness (21, 30), but in accordance with the less ambitious character of this composition, does not greatly develop these motifs. In the birthday-poem for Lucan's widow Argentaria Polla, which closes the book, Statius writes mainly as a poet singing (19) of another poet (us-

[48] This inability to begin singing is even more drawn out in the self-consolations in Book 5 (5.3 and 5.5), because there Statius the consoler is also himself the mourner; cf. Gibson 2006a: xlvi–l.

[49] Cf. van Dam 1984, 336–40.

[50] Such a context is also present in some of Statius' descriptive poems (see below, 162 on 1.5, and 170–1 on 4.6), and indeed, as in those poems, Statius here celebrates a special, 'distinctive' possession of his addressee.

ing the Muse Calliope as a mythological spokesperson), and although he also consoles Polla, he does not stress his *amicitia* with her. If this Polla is indeed the same as the wife of Pollius Felix, with whom Statius shows himself elsewhere to be on familiar terms,[51] this is somewhat surprising, but as in the case of Abascantus, we may speculate that too much stress on *amicitia* might suggest that the praises uttered in the poem stemmed from social obligation rather than—as the poet must wish them to appear—from his own generous impulse.

The descriptive poems

Of the poems written for the emperor, three contain large-scale description of a work of art or architecture: 1.1 of the colossal equestrian statue of Domitian in the Forum, 4.2 of the new palace on the Palatine, and 4.3 of the Via Domitiana. Of the non-imperial poems also, a fair proportion put description centre-stage: 1.3 on the villa of Manilius Vopiscus in Tibur (modern Tivoli), 1.5 on the baths of Claudius Etruscus, 2.3 on a tree in the garden of the house of Atedius Melior, 2.2 and 3.1 on the villa of Pollius Felix at Surrentum (modern Sorrento) and a temple of Hercules on its grounds, and 4.6 (which will be discussed together with other poems from Book 4) on a statuette of Hercules owned by Novius Vindex. Description however is never the sole content of the poems: it is always put in relation to the addressee—who is praised through his possessions or constructions—, but also in relation to Statius himself, who, here as elsewhere, needs to motivate his utterance. In the descriptive *Silvae* there is no 'occasion' in the sense of a ritualised event like a wedding or a funeral, but there is one in the broader sense that it is always a visit of the poet that provides the occasion for the poem.[52] This visit may be more or less elaborately narrated, but it inevitably involves Statius in speaking of himself.

In the poem on the villa of Manilius Vopiscus in Tibur (1.3), Statius casts his admiring description as grateful memory of the day he had been invited (13 *memoranda dies*). In his mind's eye, Statius re-

[51] On the identification see Nisbet 1978. On Pollius Felix and his wife Polla see below, 162–4.

[52] Of the imperial poems just mentioned, only 4.2 originated in a visit, while 1.1 and 4.3 are composed from another perspective (above, 144–50).

calls his impressions, and conflates his astonished straying through the building *then* with his bewilderment *now* as to what to sing and in which order: “Hither by my eyes I am torn, thither by my mind” (38). But in spite of all the first-person verbs like “I wander” or “shall I praise?”,[53] Statius acquires no individuality beyond that of guest and poet,[54] and there is no indication of the nature of the relationship with Vopiscus. In *Silvae* 1.5, on a bath-house built by Claudius Etruscus, Statius’ roles are likewise those of poet and guest, but here *amicitia* is stressed: the poet is not just a guest, but a guest at a festive meal, and in this sympotic context he exclaims in Horatian accents that he wishes to revel for his dear friend: *dilecto uolo lasciuire sodali* (9).[55] This means of course that he is going to write ‘light’ poetry, and, in a by now familiar move, he rejects his customary inspirational deities for more fitting ones, in this case water-nymphs and Vulcan (as the god of heating), and announces that he will briefly interrupt his work on the *Thebaid* (1–9). He then goes on having more fun with the motifs of singing, lyre and Muse, and finally reassures the nymphs that the “work” (29 *opus*) he undertakes belongs to them, that it is their new habitation that he will celebrate “in soft song” (29 *carmine molli*). The same technique of adapting the inspirational deities to the theme is also used in *Silvae* 2.3, on a curiously shaped tree near a pond in the garden of Atedius Melior’s town-house: here water-nymphs and Fauns are invoked (6–7) to tell an Ovidian story of how a nymph, pursued by Pan, was metamorphosed into the tree. At Melior’s house Statius was a regular, not an occasional guest, and Statius therefore makes use of a different occasion than a visit: Melior’s birthday. The poem is not so much a description motivated by a visit, as a story offered as a gift (62–3).

In the two poems to Pollius Felix, the autobiographical element is more strongly present. The description of his Surrentine villa in *Silvae* 2.2 uses the same encomiastic technique of not knowing what to praise first as the description of the villa of Manilius Vopiscus,[56] but

[53] Cf. *canam … quiescam?* (34), *mirer …?* (37), *trahor* (38), *dicam …?* (38), *uidi* (47), *uagor … duco … calcabam* (52–3), *mirer …?* (57), *referam …?* (64), *laudem …?* (81).

[54] In his quality as poet he again challenges *fama* (27–8).

[55] Cf. Hor. *Carm.* 2.7.27–8 *recepto / dulce mihi furere est amico*, or (from the ode Statius most insistently evokes) 3.19.18 *insanire iuuat*.

[56] After a proem expressing the inadequacy of his poetic powers (36–42) and of his eyes and steps as he wanders through the building (42–4), Statius punctuates his

here Statius begins with an introduction in which he explains the background to his visit: after successfully competing in the poetic contests of the Neapolitan Games, he was on his way home, when Pollius invited him to Surrentum (6–12).[57] What is interesting here is that Statius assumes that his addressee (and presumably also the reader of the published collection) knows that he is a native of Naples: he uses such expressions as "the four-year festival of my fatherland" (6 *patrii quinquennia lustri*) for the Neapolitan Games, or "my native bay" (9 *gentile fretum*) for the Bay of Naples; later, he speaks of the Neapolitans as "we" (97) and "my countrymen" (135–6).[58] This stress on the Campanian background he shares with Pollius is certainly to be linked to the great familiarity with Pollius and his wife Polla that Statius displays, and that allows him to end the poem with praise of their marital concord, instructing them to outstrip the famous couples of ancient tradition: *priscae titulos praecedite famae* (146).

The poem on a temple of Hercules built by Pollius in the vicinity of his villa (3.1) is motivated by an occasion in the stricter sense of a ceremony: the dedication of the temple. As in other such poems, Statius assumes a quasi-ceremonial role, starting with an apostrophe to Hercules that develops into a 'kletic' hymn, bidding the god to be present at the occasion. Then, in a manner similar to that employed in 1.2, Statius asks a Muse to reveal to him the "beginnings" (49 *exordia*) of the temple, and tells an aetiological story, featuring Hercules himself as mythological spokesperson. The story turns into a renewed kletic hymn, at which the god arrives to deliver the final address to Pollius.[59] But Statius' quasi-ceremonial role at the dedication is combined with the role of guest in the embedded story. As in 2.2, Statius describes a visit to Pollius Felix at his villa (it is probably the same

description by questions like *mirer …?* (45), *referam …?* (63), *reuoluam …?* (72), *dicam …?* (98).

[57] Statius' phrasing *post patrii laetum quinquennia lustri* (6) suggests that Statius was *laetus* because of a victory in the games (that he was also glad of the invitation is explained later); van Dam's objection (1984, 198) that "that victory was reported in Statius' father's lifetime" (with reference to 5.3.225–7) ignores that Statius may have been victorious more than once (as was his father: 5.3.112–3).

[58] Different is *nostram … chelyn* (114) to refer to hexameter poetry (cf. 1.4.30 *nostras … leges* for poetry as such). Again different is the "we" of 129 and 142, where Statius includes himself in the common mass of mortals, contrasted with the few, such as Pollius Felix, who have attained philosophical wisdom.

[59] The motif that the poet stops singing when the god takes over (163–5) is also used in 4.3.119–20; see above, 149.

visit),[60] but he now adds that he could also have found relaxation and cool air at his own country house at Alba Longa, which had recently been equipped with running water through the favour of the emperor (61–4). This autobiographical detail does not come unprepared-for in the context,[61] but is still striking, as it is only mentioned here in the first three books of the *Silvae*. Speaking of one's own life is a sign of familiarity, and as such it is presumably intended here. In the rest of the poem, too, Statius gives the impression that he is close not only to Pollius himself, but also to his wife Polla and even their grandchildren,[62] an impression that is confirmed in the preface to Book 3, addressed to "sweetest Pollius" (3.*ep.*1 *Polli dulcissime*), as well as in a later poem to Pollius son-in-law Julius Menecrates (4.8).

Statius' address to his wife

Pollius also plays a role in the final poem of Book 3, in which Statius exhorts his wife to accompany him on his move back to his native Naples (3.5): Pollius' Surrentine villa is mentioned as one of the attractions of the Bay (102), and in the preface to the book Statius flatteringly tells Pollius that he does not so much plan to retire to his fatherland as to him (3.*ep.*23–5). Statius there also explains to Pollius that the poem is a *sermo*, "conversation" (3.*ep.*21–3), and indeed there are none of the usual 'poetical' trappings: apostrophes, invocations to the gods, or fictions of lyre-playing; the poem represents not song, but speech.[63] Addressing his wife enables Statius to talk of himself, and the poem has often been seen as a *sphragis*, a 'seal poem', giving

[60] The time of year is the same: the picnic described at 52–88 took place on August 13 (52–60, 68), whereas the Neapolitan Games, from which Statius was returning when he was invited by Pollius (2.2.6–8), were held at the beginning of August; see van Dam 1984, 197. But the visit narrated in 3.1 may also have taken place a year or two years after that described in 2.2.

[61] Mention of Statius' stay away from home follows naturally from the preceding sentence *omnisque pudicis / Itala terra focis Hecateidas excolit idus* (59–60). Moreover, Alba is associatively connected with nearby Aricia and Nemi, which have just been mentioned (56–7).

[62] Polla: 87, 158–62, 178–9; grandchildren: 46–8, 87, 143, 175–9.

[63] Not writing, although Henderson 2007, 262 and Augoustakis and Newlands 2007, 121 speak of the poem's "epistolarity" and "epistolary form". There is no "physical distance between husband and wife" (121); on the contrary, close proximity is established from the beginning, with Statius noticing his wife's worries by day and "in the nights we share" (1–2).

information about the poet and his *patria* by way of conclusion to the collection—the assumption is that Statius did not plan to continue the *Silvae* beyond Book 3.[64] But unlike what one would expect of a *sphragis* to the *Silvae*, there is no mention of the *Silvae* themselves, no defiance of an envious reception or proud prediction of everlasting success.[65] Moreover, the preface to Book 3 makes it difficult to read the poem as a farewell to the *Silvae*, because there Statius declares that "many" of the poems in the book came into being when he was a guest of Pollius (3.*ep.*1–6), so that his retirement to that same Pollius would seem to bode well for further production. So, rather than announce the end of the *Silvae*, the poem may announce the end of the *Roman Silvae*, and publicise that Statius is no longer available for this type of poetry at Rome, although he may be at the scenes of Roman *villeggiatura* such as Baiae, Cumae, Misenum and Pollius' Surrentum (95–104).

But even though Statius does not speak of the *Silvae*, he does give a survey of his poetic career, now for the first time adducing his victory in the Alban and defeat in the Capitoline Games, and, as he had done before, presenting himself as the poet of the *Thebaid* (28–36). Although his intended retirement is not explicitly motivated by a wish to write in greater ease, the attention paid to his poetic career in combination with the expression of a preference for the *otia* (85) of Naples suggests the *sphragis* of the *Georgics* that Statius had earlier evoked in 3.2.[66] But there is an important difference between that *sphragis* and his own: whereas Virgil in Naples had "flourished in the studies of inglorious *otium*" *audax … iuuenta*, "in the boldness of youth", Statius, although his poetry, too, is characterised by *audacia* (3.*ep.*4),[67] has entered his *senium*, "old age" (13). He reinforces this by

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64 See Hardie 1983, 182; Nauta 2002a, 195, 287; Henderson 2007, 261, 265. For 3.5 as the conclusion to *Silvae* 1–3 see Klodt 2005, 197–202, with references to earlier literature.

65 Statius does employ both motifs at the end of the *Thebaid* (12.810–9). For *liuor* and fame in the *sphragis* see e.g. McKeown on Ov. *Am.* 1.15.1–2. The closest analogies to 3.5 as a *sphragis* are Ov. *Tr.* 5.14, likewise addressed to the poet's wife, but with the boast of having giving her undying fame in the *Tristia* themselves, and Mart. 10.103–4 (a few years later than *Silv.* 3.5), likewise in connection with retirement to the *patria*, but again claiming fame won by the work itself.

66 See above, 156.

67 Also 1.*ep.*22 (likewise of fast composition). Other types of *audacia*: 1.*ep.*19 (offering 1.1 to the emperor), 4.7.27 (of the *Thebaid*: challenging the *Aeneid*); cf.

stating that he is *fessus*, “weary” (12), and by relating how he has recently been near-fatally ill (37–42). Moreover, for Virgil the Bay of Naples was only a preferred retreat, whereas for Statius it is his *patria*, determining his identity, with all that this implies in terms of bringing Greek and Roman culture together.[68] So Statius in this poem asserts three identities that all converge on *otium*: being a Neapolitan, being a poet, and now being old. All three will be further developed in Book 4.

The poems in Book 4

Whether or not Statius planned on abandoning the *Silvae* after Book 3, he did not do so, although Book 4 is in many ways a new departure. As Alex Hardie has well remarked, the *persona* adopted by Statius in Book 4, especially in the non-imperial poems, is significantly different from that in the other books: rather than as a Greek epideictic poet, Statius now presents himself in a more Roman guise, taking as his models the personal poetry of Horace and in one case Catullus.[69] This means that a larger proportion of the text of the poems is taken up by Statius’ personal life, and that more autobiographical material is included. Moreover, not all poems are motivated by a ceremony or a visit, and some even dispense with the fiction of oral performance, acknowledging the presence of writing or representing themselves a spoken rather than sung.

These new features are all present in the first of the non-imperial poems in the book, *Silvae* 4.4, a letter to Vitorius Marcellus. The letter is not written on a specific occasion, other than that the summer season prompts Statius to urge his friend to take some rest. Moreover, Statius’ words in the preface to Book 4 seem to imply that it was first sent to Marcellus as part of the published book, without having been privately offered beforehand.[70] The epistolary form is thematised from the start, when Statius addresses the letter, instructing it to travel from

Nauta 2006, 36–7. But Statius’ father was *audax/ ingenii* in his Neapolitan youth (5.3.135–6).

[68] Cf. the explicit juxtapositions *Latias Graias* (45) and especially *quam Romanus honos et Graia licentia miscent* (94).

[69] Hardie 1983, 164–5; cf. also Nauta 2002a, 277–9.

[70] 4.*ep.*8–10: *cuius* [sc. of the Via Domitiana] *beneficio tu quo<que> maturius epistulam meam accipies, quam tibi in hoc libro a Neapoli scribo.*

Campania to Rome, to find Marcellus, to render him the customary salutation (10 *salutem*), and to address him in metrical form. The verse letter proper which then follows is still partially conceptualised as song, at least in the formula with which it is brought (or rather seems to be brought) to a conclusion: *haec ego Chalcidicis ad te, Marcelle, sonabam / litoribus*, "this I sing to you Marcellus, on Chalcidian [i.e. Neapolitan] shores" (78–9). The 'epistolary' imperfect, together with the indication of the location of the writer (which is then expanded by a description of the effects of the eruption of the Vesuvius), suggests that we have reached the end of the letter,[71] as does the reminiscence of the end of Virgil's *Georgics* (perhaps the more easily recognised because of the earlier allusion in 3.2):[72] *haec … canebam*, with localisation in Naples.[73] Like Virgil, Statius in this concluding section mentions his poetic works, the *Thebaid* and the *Achilleid*, and sets them in relation to the achievements of the emperor. In doing so, he continues the letter, which reaches its *uale* only some twenty lines later (101). This *uale* is then expanded, as sometimes happens in letters, by an appeal to the addressee's love (101 *amorem*) and friendship (103 *amicitia*), ending with the word *amico* (105).[74]

In the body of the verse letter the friendship is expressed by a continuous oscillation between passages in which Statius inquires about, exhorts or praises Marcellus and passages in which he talks about himself. He first appears in the poem to stress that he too loves Marcellus' best friend Gallus and is sure of this love being reciprocated (20–5). Then, while pressing upon Marcellus the advantages of temporary *otia* (34), he adduces himself as an example: "my lyre, too, sometimes grows tired and its strings are relaxed" (32–3), which implies that he enjoys *otium* when he does not write. This is somewhat at odds with the picture he subsequently draws of his poetry as the solace of his *otium*, in contrast to the oratorical, administrative and anticipated military activities of his addressee (49–55):

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[71] Cf. Hor. *Ep.* 1.10.49 *haec tibi dictabam post fanum putre Vacunae* (at the conclusion of a poetical letter likewise contrasting the addressee's life in Rome with the poet's life in the country).

[72] See above, 156.

[73] On the epistolary imperfect, as well as on the allusion to the *Georgics*, see Coleman 1988, 153 *ad loc.*

[74] *Amorem* is Calderini's correction for *honorem*, rejected by Courtney 1990, but epistolary parallels of the type *uale et nos ama* (see Cugusi 1983, 64, with references in n. 97bis) support the emendation.

nos otia uitae
solamur cantu uentosaque gaudia famae
quaerimus. en egomet somnum et geniale secutus
litus, ubi Ausonio se condidit hospita portu
Parthenope, tenues ignauo pollice chordas
pulso Maroneique sedens in margine templi
sumo animum et magni tumulis adcanto magistri

I solace a leisured life with song and seek the fickle joys of fame. Look! Pursuing sleep and the genial shore where stranger Parthenope found refuge in Ausonian haven [i.e. Naples], I idly strike the slender strings; sitting on the verge of Maro's shrine, I take heart and sing at the tomb of the great master. (tr. SB)

The inspiration provided by Virgil of course refers to the writing of epic, but perhaps it is possible to discern an exceptional allusion to the *Silvae* themselves in the phrase *tenues ignauo pollice chordas*, because the adjective *tenuis* regularly denotes slighter poetry, and is twice used in the *Silvae* to characterise the poem in hand.[75] Statius would then mean more or less what he says in his prefaces: that the *Silvae* are a kind of prelude to his epic poetry, to which he turns as soon as he has "taken heart".[76] Elsewhere in the poems of the *Silvae* (as distinguished from the prefaces) Statius never refers to the *Silvae* themselves, even though an appeal to earlier success in the same kind of poetry might seem to confer more authority than the invocation of experience in epic.[77] The reason for this reticence cannot lie simply in the 'slight' character of the *Silvae* that Statius stresses in the prefaces, because the poems he offers to his addressees are considered to be valuable gifts (not the less valuable for being the product of brilliant improvisation), and sometimes explicitly claim immortality for them-

[75] See *Silv.* 1.4.36 *tenuiore lyra* (of 1.4. itself), 4.7.9 *carmen tenuare* (of 4.7. itself) (cf. also 5.3.98 *uires tenuare*, of comedy). The juxtaposition with *ignauo* strengthens this impression: that adjective is used in a poetological context by Ovid at *Am.* 1.15.1 to contrast poetry, but more specifically love poetry, with the active life, and at *Am.* 2.18.3 to contrast love elegy with epic.

[76] Cf. 1.*ep.*8–9, 4.*ep.*29.

[77] There is one partial exception: when Statius urges Atedius Melior to listen to his consolation, he claims to have earlier consoled fathers, mothers and children (2.1.30–2). This presumably refers to occasional poems, but cannot refer to poems included in the *Silvae*: there are no consolations to fathers or mothers, whereas the one consolation to a son (3.3) is later. In 3.3 Statius mentions that he too has mourned a father (39–42), as he also does at 2.1.33–4. This may imply that (a version of) 5.3 was circulating, but again the reference cannot be to the *Silvae* as published by Statius, because 5.3 was only included in the *Silvae* after Statius' death.

selves.[78] Rather, by presenting each individual poem not as an instance of something he has composed earlier, but as an interruption of his daily work as an epic poet, Statius makes each occasion seem unique and special.[79] So it is perhaps not accidental that we find a (possible, and in any case muted) reference to the *Silvae* themselves precisely in a poem that is exceptionally non-occasional.

A further similar reference may be detected somewhat later on in the poem, when Statius again draws a contrast between his addressee and himself (69–70):

> nos facta aliena canendo
> uergimus in senium: propriis tu pulcher in armis
> ipse canenda geres

> I drift into old age singing other men's deeds, whereas you, handsome in your own arms, shall yourself perform acts deserving praise (tr. SB)

Although *facta canere* is typical of epic, the praise of Marcellus in the preceding and following lines may also suggest the *Silvae* themselves. However that may be, Statius characterises himself as a poet in the same manner as he did in the poem to his wife: like Virgil, he writes poetry in Campanian *otium*, but unlike Virgil, who did so *audax … iuuenta*, he is getting old. But this does not prevent him from embarking on new poetic projects: at the end of the letter he asks Marcellus whether he should undertake an epic on the emperor or be content with the *Achilleid*.[80] His identity remains that of a *uates* (101).

Whereas *Silvae* 4.4 draws part of its inspiration from the *Epistles* of Horace, *Silvae* 4.5, to Septimius Severus, and 4.7, to Vibius Maximus, recall Horace's lyric production, the one poem being in alcaics, the other in sapphics. As lyric odes, they employ the fiction of being sung to the accompaniment of the lyre, but nevertheless they are also to be thought of as letters, the ode to Vibius Maximus because the addressee dwells in Dalmatia, the ode to Septimius Severus because it employs an epistolary formula of greeting (3–4 *Seuerum … saluto*)

[78] Gifts: apart from the passages from the prefaces listed in n. 32, see 1.4.31–4, 2.3.62–3 (*parua … / dona, sed ingenti forsan uictura sub aeuo*). For consolations compared to funerary monuments see above, 159, with n. 44.

[79] For extensive discussion of the concept of 'occasion' and of the *Silvae* as occasional poetry see now Rühl 2006, 81–212.

[80] This is of course to be interpreted as a *recusatio* of an epic on the emperor; the self-portrayal as old helps to suggest that Statius is not strong enough (cf. 97–8) for such an undertaking; cf. Nauta 2006, 33.

and is to be thought of as being sung in Alba Longa, where Severus does not seem to be present. Statius’ Alban estate, which in the previous books was mentioned only once, and that briefly,[81] is now foregrounded as the setting of the poet’s Horatian life of modest contentment, and also of his victory in the Alban Games (1–28). This fact from his career as a poet is specific, but the details of his life as a person are conventional: he owns a small plot of land, has no cattle, etc. Statius does, however, introduce a further autobiographical element, by writing that Alba comes first in his affections *post patriam*, “after his fatherland” (21), assuming, apparently, that this requires no further explication for Severus (or for the reader of the published book, who knows of Statius’ Neapolitan identity from the earlier books or from poem 4.4). In *Silvae* 4.7, Statius likewise introduces his birthplace, and in a similar off-hand manner, when in the course of remonstrating with Vibius Maximus for not returning to Latium from Dalmatia, he contrasts his own practice, although “born in a nearer land” (17). Otherwise Statius’ self-presentation here is exclusively that of the epic poet: at the beginning he prays to the Muse Erato and Pindar to help him in the unwonted genre of lyric (1–12), and later on he recalls Maximus’ help with the publication of the *Thebaid* and with the newly-started *Achilleid* (21–28). In this review of his work, the ode is close to the letter to Vitorius Marcellus, as in the declaration that his epic poetry is motivated by the “joys of fame”; here he even boasts that the *Thebaid* “with bold lyre essays the joys of Mantuan [i.e. Virgilian] fame” (28 *temptat audaci fide Mantuanae / gaudia famae*).

Apart from the verse letter and the ode, Statius also experimented with a further Horatian genre, satire, although here the formality of Statian panegyric is even more obtrusive than in the other genres. His poem on a statuette of Hercules owned by Novius Vindex (4.6) begins as follows:

> Forte remittentem curas Phoeboque leuatum
> pectora, cum patulis tererem uagus otia Saeptis
> iam moriente die, rapuit me cena benigni
> Vindicis.

> It happened as I wandered idly at sunset in the spacious Enclosure [the Saepta Julia in the Campus Martius], my tasks put by and my mind relieved of Phoebus, that kindly Vindex took me off to dinner. (tr. SB)

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[81] See above, 164.

This beginning combines allusion to the beginnings of two of Horace's satires: 2.8, where the *Nasidieni … cena beati* is announced as the theme, and 1.9, where the poet happens to wander (*forte*) along the Via Sacra, when he is accosted by an acquaintance. But whereas Horace is meditating over some poetry, Statius is "relieved of Phoebus". We have here an ingenious variation on the motive that Statius interrupts his epic work to write a smaller poem, and rather than on Phoebus calls on other, more appropriate deities for inspiration: here there is no other deity, and indeed the poem nowhere represents itself as being sung: like Horace's satires, it is a *sermo*, to be thought of as being spoken. In the beginning the tone remains light as Statius describes the dinner party,[82] stressing the *uerus amor*, "true affection" (12) reigning at Vindex's board. But the invitation has the same function as that in *Silvae* 2.2 (which has a similar narrative introduction) and the symposium as that in *Silvae* 1.5 and 2.4: they provide the context for witnessing and describing a possession of the host, in this case a statuette, to which the larger part of the poem is then devoted.

After these more or less Horatian pieces (4.4–7), Book 4 continuous with a poem that more closely resembles those in the earlier books, a congratulation to Julius Menecrates, son-in-law of Pollius Felix, on the birth of a third child (4.8). Statius begins in his wonted quasi-ceremonial manner with *pande fores superum*, "throw open the doors of the gods [i.e. of the temples]"[83], and continues with a volley of apostrophes. But the singing and lyre-playing is presented as coexisting with writing, in that Statius complains of not having received a letter of commission from his addressee (35–41):

> cumque tibi uagiret tertius infans
> protinus ingenti non uenit nuntia cursu
> littera, quae festos cumulare altaribus ignes
> et redimire chelyn postesque ornare iuberet
> Albanoque cadum sordentem promere fumo
> et cantu signare diem, sed tardus inersque
> nunc demum mea uota cano?

> When your third child was wailing, did no letter come straightaway posthaste to bring me word, telling me to heap my altar with festal fire and wreathe my lyre and decorate my doorway and bring out a jar be-

[82] The dinner party is itself a setting for *medio … Helicone petitus / sermo* (13), of which Statius' poem may be conceived of as an instance.
[83] Cf. the same phrase *pande fores* in 1.2.17 (above, 153).

> grimed with Alban smoke and mark the day with chalk? Only now, slow and sluggish, do I sing my vows? (tr. SB)

The choice of Alban wine not only reflects its good quality, which made it fitting for birthday celebrations, but also refers to Statius' Alban estate.[84] The reference, however, is made in such a manner that it would not necessarily be recognised by someone not familiar with Statius' circumstances, and this is suggestive of intimate communication between poet and addressee. The same is true of the unobtrusive "we" with which Statius refers to the rites of Neapolitan mysteries, implying that he is an initiate himself (51). Similarly, the exhortation to Puteoli and Surrentum to rejoice assumes knowledge of Pollius Felix's links to these towns, and the references to Pollius' wife, son and grandchildren show Statius as even more of a friend of the family than he appeared in *Silvae* 2.2. and 3.1.[85] For all its 'public' address to temples and towns, the poem conveys a private atmosphere.

The last poem in the book (4.9) is a Saturnalian joke addressed to Plotius Grypus, written in hendecasyllables and inspired by Catullus 14. Writing is thematised at the beginning and the end of the poem, because Statius starts with complaining that Grypus has sent him a little book in exchange for a little book (*libellum … pro libello*) and concludes with expressing his hope that Grypus will not now again play him the same trick by sending hendecasyllables in exchange for hendecasyllables. Statius is still 'only the poet'[86]—the little book he had sent to Grypus consisted of his own work (9)—, but also a contemporary Roman with a life outside poetry: when illustrating the inappropriateness of symmetrical exchange, Statius mentions his attendance at his patron's *salutatio* and *cena* (46–52). Statius here approaches the themes, style and self-presentation of Martial, but has also reached the furthest point of his experimentation. The panegyrical poems included in Book 5 return to the manner of *Silvae* 1–3.

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[84] Horace's ode on the birthday of Maecenas (*Carm.* 4.11) begins *Est mihi nonum superantis annum / plenus Albani cadus* (the combination *Albanoque cadum* in Statius seems to signal an allusion, perhaps reinforced by *sordentem … fumo* ~ *sordidum … fumum* (11–2)). For wine and smoke on Statius' Alban estate cf. also 4.5.13–6.

[85] Puteoli and Surrentum: 7–10 (the *plaga … Surrentina* is called the *materni litus aui*, but an outsider would need to know *Silv.* 2.2.96–7, 110, 135, 3.1.91–2 to see the relevance of Puteoli). Wife: 13–4; son: 12 (not mentioned elsewhere); grandchildren: 10, 54–62. Statius also uses the word *amare* for his relationship to Menecrates (33).

[86] The phrase 'only the poet' is A. Hardie's (1983: 139).

Conclusion

The above survey of both the imperial and the non-imperial poems in the *Silvae* has shown that Statius' self-presentation is consistent but varied. The role in which he addresses his addressees is mostly that of the praise poet, and this role is constructed with the help of certain standard fictions, such as singing and lyre-playing and performing at the ceremony itself. These fictions allow Statius to speak with a certain authority, invoking gods, giving instructions, interpreting the situation, challenging the literary and historical tradition, and in doing all this praising the addressee; his access to the world of mythology also allows him to invest his praises in certain cases with the authority of divine or quasi-divine spokespersons. But this role, precisely because it is to a large extent fictional, needs to be combined with other roles that ground Statius' utterances in his position in the real world. In the poems to the emperor this is the role of a representative subject, except in the one poem where Statius is personally involved by paying his thanks for an invitation to the palace. In the poems for non-imperial addressees his role is basically that of a friend, or rather of an *amicus*, because the Roman term also covers asymmetrical relationships that may be sociologically described as 'patronage'. In the role of representative subject no individuality is called for, and no autobiographical details are offered; in the role of *amicus* Statius needs to be present as a person, but the manner in which this happens varies according to the relationship with the addressee (which sometimes demands articulation of the patronage relationship, in other cases some self-disclosure as a sign of intimacy, etc.), as well as according to the genre (consolations may need to invoke Statius' own grief, descriptions to specify the visit at which the described object was seen, etc.). Generally, however, little autobiographical information is provided, and what is provided is closely connected to Statius' identity as a poet: this holds for the small estate at Alba Longa, exploited as the setting for a life of Horatian contentment in 3.1, 4.5 and 4.8, and for the Virgilian complex of Naples, *otium* and poetry (but combined with old age, not youth) introduced in 3.2, elaborated in the autobiographical conclusion to Book 3 and taken up again in 4.4. In general the non-imperial poems in Book 4 are closer to the Roman tradition of autobiographical poetry than those in Books 1–3 and again in Book 5, in which the poet stages himself as the less individualised praise poet

of the Greek tradition, even though combining this, as necessary, with the requirements of the role of a Roman *amicus*.

One aspect of Statius' 'I' in the *Silvae* has not been discussed in the preceding pages, although it is in many ways the most important one, that of what he thinks and feels, his opinions and attitudes. His work of praising cannot be done in an ideologically neutral manner, and Statius in the course of the *Silvae* takes a stand on many and various issues: the active versus the contemplative life, the evaluation of luxury, the proper treatment of slaves, the virtues required of imperial freedmen, etc. But these opinions and the authority with which he expresses them are only in a limited sense his own, due to the roles he plays in his poems. On the one hand he resembles the Greek praise poets he evokes in that his 'I' is a 'representative I', and that he claims to express what everybody believes or, when that is not the case, should believe; thus, his authority derives from the consensus he expresses.[87] On the other hand, his role as an *amicus* demands a more personal stance, but the type of asymmetrical *amicitia* which connects him with his addressees allows of only the semblance of independent opinion; thus, his authority is to certain extent borrowed from the *amici* he praises. This implies that a full study of the Statian 'I' would at the same time have to be a study of the Statian 'you'.

[87] On the 'representative I' in archaic Greek poetry cf. Slings 1990, 1–3.

STATIUS, DOMITIAN AND ACKNOWLEDGING PATERNITY: RITUALS OF SUCCESSION IN THE *THEBAID*[*]

Gianpiero Rosati

1) Politics and literature, two powers confronting each other

As is well known, the epilogue of the *Thebaid* is marked by two dominant figures, with respect to which Statius defines his own position.[1] In consigning his work to posterity, the poet pays a twofold homage to Virgil and Domitian, that is the highest authorities in literature and politics respectively:

> Durabisne procul dominoque legere superstes,
> o mihi bissenos multum uigilata per annos
> Thebai? Iam certe praesens tibi Fama benignum
> strauit iter coepitque nouam monstrare futuris.
> Iam te magnanimus dignatur noscere Caesar,
> Itala iam studio discit memoratque iuuentus.
> Viue, precor; nec tu diuinam Aeneida tempta,
> sed longe sequere et uestigia semper adora.
> Mox, tibi si quis adhuc praetendit nubila liuor,
> occidet, et meriti post me referentur honores.
>
> (Stat. *Theb.* 12.810–9)

> My *Thebaid*, on whom I have spent twelve wakeful years, will you long endure and be read when your master is gone? Already, 'tis true, Fame has strewn a kindly path before you and begun to show the new arrival to posterity. Already great-hearted Caesar deigns to know you, and the studious youth of Italy learns you and recites. Live, I pray; and essay not the divine *Aeneid*, but ever follow in her footsteps from afar in adoration. Soon, if any envy still spreads clouds before you, it shall perish, and after me you shall be paid the honours you deserve.[2]

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[*] Versions of this paper were delivered at the Amsterdam Symposium and in Bari, Florence, Palermo and Udine. I thank my audiences at those occasions for their comments, and Glenn Most for his critical remarks on an earlier draft of these pages.

[1] On this much discussed passage cf., among others, Williams 1986; Hardie 1993, 110ff. and Hardie 1997; Nugent 1996; Braund 1996; Hinds 1998, 91–8; Pollmann 2001; Dominik 2003; Georgacoupoulou 2005, 229–42.

[2] Translations from Statius are by Shackleton Bailey 2003.

What immediately strikes the reader (and has long been interpreted as a sample of the 'Virgilianism' of the Flavian epicists) is the hyperbolic homage to the great epic poet – especially in comparison with the fairly restrained tribute paid to the emperor. Virgil is exalted to the ranks of the gods (an honour usually reserved for the emperor), and is said to be such a superior model that his followers should remain at a respectful distance, showing the veneration that is due to a god.[3]

The deification of ancestors, as we know, is the typical custom of imperial power (starting with Augustus himself, who promotes the deification of Caesar); but we also know that there is nothing innocent or disinterested about this custom. In other words, deification is part of a logic of self-promotion[4] and above all of succession: the figure who is deified is the one to whom one hopes to succeed, the one whose power one hopes to inherit (as, precisely with reference to Augustus, already Cassius Dio lucidly observed: "so they [*sc*. the triumvirs] eagerly did everything which tended to Caesar's honour, in expectation of some day being themselves thought worthy of like honours ", 47.18.2).[5] The deification of one's predecessor is an operation which, in time, will benefit the promoter of the initiative: it is part of a strategy of consolidation and perpetuation of one's own power, a way to prepare one's own immortality. Consequently, also the gesture of Statius, who deifies Virgil, proves to be less ingenuous and innocent than it has been described by a long critical tradition.[6] In deifying Virgil, and thus certifying his 'classic' status, the poet Statius is simply preparing the way for his own inclusion among the classics (as is confirmed by the image of Fame, who has started to show the new poem to future ages). Turning Virgil into a god, a classic to be con-

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[3] The phrase *uestigia adorare* seems to have just one parallel, Sid. *Carm*. 22.*ep*.3 *nos uestigia doctrinae ipsius adorantes* (with reference to the poet Antedius). This image combines that of 'following in the steps' (*uestigia legere*, or *premere*, and sim.) and that of religious veneration. It is evident (cf. Hardie 1993, 110; Pollmann 2004, *ad loc*.) that there is influence of Lucretius' image of following in the steps of his 'god' Epicurus: 3.3ff. *te sequor, o Graiae gentis decus, inque tuis nunc / ficta pedum pono pressis uestigia signis, / non ita certandi cupidus quam propter amorem / quod te imitari aueo*… In Statius *adoro* also occurs, with reference to his other epic model Lucan, at *Silv.* 2.7.135 (last line of the poem).

[4] Cf. e.g. Plin. *Pan*. 12.1 *Dicauit caelo … Vespasianum Titus, Domitianus Titum, … ille ut dei filius, hic ut frater uideretur*. On this theme see esp. Gesche 1978.

[5] Translation by Cary 1914.

[6] Good Henderson 1991, 40: "Statius' most counter-Virgilian moment is, precisely, his overt act of deference to Virgil".

templated "from afar" (let me recall the similar attitude of Silius Italicus, who bestows religious honours upon him, and draws near to his tomb as if it were a temple)[7] means getting rid of him, removing his unwelcome presence (he too is in a way a tyrant, from whom Flavian epics seek to be emancipated) and preparing to take his place, to substitute for him: in other words, it is a rite of succession. Not only elsewhere in his works Statius appears to be less inclined to a show of modesty, and ready to take up the challenge (such as *Silv.* 4.7.25–8 *nostra / Thebais multa cruciata lima /* temptat *audaci fide Mantuanae / gaudia famae* "my *Thebaid*, tortured by much filing, essays with daring string the joys of Mantuan fame")[8]; but the "well-earned tribute of honours" (*meriti honores*) which is predicted for the *Thebaid* in the last line of the epilogue is – as Philip Hardie has shown[9] – of the kind that is bestowed on a hero or a god.

It is fairly clear, then, that behind this hyperbolic homage lies a shrewd form of self-promotion. However, as we were saying, the highly restrained homage paid to Domitian is far from ritualistic (also compared with other expressions of homage used by Statius, e.g. in *Theb.* 1.17ff.). The statement that the emperor, the great Caesar, "deigns to be acquainted with" the poet's work actually turns out to be, on the contrary, a ploy of self-commendation, to promote his own work: in the sense that the poet turns the (professed) interest and approval from the emperor into an astute publicity blurb ("a book that Domitian enjoyed"). It is thus the political authority that *is forced* to pay homage to the literary authority, who depicts it in the act of showing attention and appreciation for its production; whereas the latter exploits a cunning strategy of *nondum*, in order to postpone *sine die* the pledge to celebrate that political authority by which it claims to be appreciated.[10]

The professed appreciation on the part of the political authority is reinforced by the boast of popular success, *praesens Fama*, which has

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7 Cf. Plin. *Ep.* 3.7.8 *Multum ubique librorum, multum statuarum, multum imaginum, quas non habebat modo, uerum etiam uenerabatur, Vergili ante omnes, cuius natalem religiosius quam suum celebrabat, Neapoli maxime, ubi monimentum eius adire ut templum solebat*; but also Martial 11.48 and 50; Statius, *Silv.* 4.4.54–5; see in general Bettini 1976–7.

8 To be seen also *Silv.* 5.3.233f.; cf., respectively, Hinds 1998, 93–4 and Gibson 2004, 150–1.

9 Hardie 1993, 110f.

10 Cf. Rosati 2002.

opened up a favourable route, a *benignum iter*, for the poem. The emperor's appreciation and popular success are the two requisites that are cited by another Flavian poet, Martial, who is likewise engaged in a difficult negotiation with Domitian in order to obtain his protection and economic support: the approval from power is the best form of publicity with the reading public, and success with the readers is the guarantee of effectiveness that the poet presents, in proposing his work as a means for the celebration of the emperor, and as the instrument of a literary and cultural policy in favour of the political authority.[11] As is well known, the poetry of the Flavian Age cultivates the myth of Augustan patronage as an ideal model, as a paradigm of the relationship between political power and intellectuals (the famous *Sint Maecenates, non derunt, Flacce, Marones*),[12] and this model appears to be implied, to a certain extent, also in this passage, apparently in an attempt to create a close analogy between the *Aeneid* and the *Thebaid*. Firstly, Statius claims for his poem the same approval from political power that Augustus had actually granted to the *Aeneid*, and secondly, he attributes to the *Thebaid* a role of education on a national level (*Itala*), thus likening it, also in this respect, to the *Aeneid* (which had rapidly become a 'text book' in schools of rhetoric).[13]

Also from this point of view, therefore, Statius is preparing his own succession to Virgil in the canon of epic poetry. While, on the one hand, the texts that are selected by grammarians as canonical are usually those of *dead* poets,[14] the *Aeneid* represents an exception, because its 'classic' status was already celebrated during the composition of the poem (no need to recall the words of Propertius announcing its completion);[15] and it is this exception – and not the norm – that Statius apparently wishes to emulate, because the series of *iam* announces a list of recognitions that the *Thebaid* already receives today, during the poet's lifetime. On the other hand, an essential requisite for inclusion

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11 Rosati 2006, 47f.

12 Cf. Nauta 2007a, 9–15.

13 Vessey 1973, 44.

14 Cf. Most 1990, 50.

15 On Virgil's early success cf. Suet. *Poet.* 102f. *bucolica eo successu edidit, ut in scaena quoque per cantores crebro pronuntiarentur*; 116ff.; *Rhet.* 16.3 (Q. Caecilius Epirota, a grammarian coeval with the poet, *primus dicitur … Vergilium … praelegere coepisse*); Tac. *Dial.* 13.2 *testis ipse populus, qui auditis in theatro Vergilii uersibus surrexit uniuersus et forte praesentem spectantemque Vergilium ueneratus est sic quasi Augustum.*

in the canon was that the texts chosen should be useful, that they should carry out a function of civil and moral education:[16] and it is implied that this requisite is met in the reference to the *Itala iuuentus*, who read and memorise the poet's work. In a word, we find clear confirmation that what is enacted here is, to all intents and purposes, a ceremony of poetic succession, in which Statius assigns a role of model not only to the figure of Virgil, but also to his relationship with the Augustan principate, thus suggesting an analogous civil and political function for himself and his own work (as well as, obviously, an analogous protection and support on the part of the emperor). In other words, the Augustan principate appears as the ideal model both for the poet and for the emperor, the cultural and political paradigm that is capable of providing legitimacy to both of them.

The double act of homage, to "Caesar" and to Virgil, to the political authority and the literary one, thus identifies the fixed reference points for the epic poet; but as well as the hyperbolic homage to Virgil proves to be double-edged (a mixture of respectful veneration and proud challenge), in the homage rendered to the political authority we may also detect a less deferential, more complex attitude than is apparent at first sight.[17]

As we have seen, at the end of his epic poem, Statius expresses his confident expectation that the *Thebaid* will live on beyond his *dominus*, and will be read even after his death. Who is this *dominus* that the *Thebaid* will outlive? Primarily, of course, it indicates its author; and thus Statius' affirmation appears, at first sight, to echo the thought of Horace's line, "I shall not wholly die" (*non omnis moriar*, *Carm.* 3.30), and Ovid's "I'll be borne, the finer part of me, above the stars, immortal" (*parte … meliore mei super alta perennis / astra ferar*, *Met.* 15.875f.), that is to say, the literary work survives the death of its author. But we also know that, especially under Domitian, this term is closely associated with the figure of the emperor (who claims for himself the title of *dominus et deus*), and on the basis of this Latin tradition of claiming poetic glory – in particular Ovid (*Met.* 15.871), who states that he is conscious of his own fame, *in spite of* "the wrath of Jupiter" (a common metonym to indicate the earthly Jupiter, i.e. the emperor) – we may be tempted to see in the words of Statius also a

16 See also Most 1990, 51.
17 Cf. also Pollmann 2004, 285, with bibliography.

proud affirmation of survival after the emperor's death, that is to say, the superiority of his own literary authority compared with the political authority which wields its control over the poet and his artistic activity.

But there is also another aspect which makes the homage to Domitian in the epilogue of the *Thebaid* seem particularly restrained, that is to say, the fact that the poet's hopes of future fame are based on specifically literary grounds, and are totally unconnected with political power (the fact that Caesar "deigns" to read the poem is proof of the success that Statius' work already enjoys, and the emperor himself must acknowledge this). *Durare* defines the chronological extension of the poet's fame, its projection into the future (an idea reinforced by *procul*, whether its meaning here is spatial, or, as appears more likely, temporal), but it is a striking fact that the writer's poetic glory is completely independent of the emperor. In this way, Statius appears to push to its extreme consequences a process that had already been started off by Augustan poets in similar famous anticipations of literary glory. Virgil and Horace had anchored their future fame to the duration of the power of Rome (an eternal duration, according to the Augustan ideology: cf., respectively, *A.* 9.448f. and *Carm.* 3.30.8f.), but Ovid releases it from this condition, and mentions the empire only as a paradigm of the maximum geographical extension (*Met.* 15.877).[18] That is to say, Ovid had introduced a distinction (and a potential conflict, especially with his reference to *Iouis ira*) between the political authority and the literary authority, thus freeing the latter from the relationship of subordination which it had until then been forced to accept. In Statius, we see that the process is completed: not only is the literary authority freed from the political one, but he states his own autonomy, and in a certain sense proclaims his own superiority (as Dominik puts it, "it is Statius rather than Domitian who appears to be destined to be *honoured* in the memories of future ages").[19]

What we see here is a comparison and a (potential) conflict of powers, a hostility that the literary authority must combat: the *liuor*, which accumulates 'clouds' against the poet's work, is an abstract entity personifying the enemies of poetry, from Callimachus on-

[18] No reference to any political guarantee in Lucan 9.984–6 also.
[19] Dominik 1994, 174.

wards.[20] In Ovid, for example, it systematically indicates the poet's enemies; but in one of his most significant passages, it is also associated with the thunderbolts of Jupiter (*Rem.* 369f.), which are an obvious symbol of political power, thus creating an almost natural, inevitable opposition between political power and literature, a hostility of the monarch towards a successful poet. In this perspective, the image that Statius attributes to the *liuor* against his *Thebaid*, that of *praetendere nubila*, which reminds the reader of epic poetry of the typical gesture of Homer's Zeus, the 'cloud-gatherer', could raise the suspicion that a hostility exists on the part of the political authority (the earthly Jupiter) towards this work which is enjoying success with the readers (and which will soon, like the *Aeneid*, receive divine honours, whereas his enemy will die [*occidet*]).

I do not think that we must see in Statius' language any intentional ambiguities, through which he issues a (dangerous) challenge to imperial power. Rather, there are objective ideological tensions that underlie the relationship between literature and politics, and sometimes emerge more or less overtly. Anyway, the literary authority comes face to face with the political authority, and sets up a negotiation in which the reference to the Virgilian and Augustan model (that is to say, to the relationship between Virgilian poetry and Augustan power) and to the partly political role that Augustus' principate assigned to Virgil's poetry serves as an effective means to exert pressure on the new regime, which avowedly took its inspiration, as is well known, from that political model.[21]

The problem that faces the Flavian political regime is in many ways similar to the one that the 'literary authority' of the same period has to face (and we find a clear reflection of this connection between the political and the poetic dimension in the work of Statius): it is a problem of succession and legitimacy, of transmission of power. It is well known that epic, more than any other literary genre, is closely associated with power: with the ways in which it is conquered, wielded and transmitted. Clearly, the problem of power, its control and its transmission is a particularly sensitive question in Rome during the period of the empire, when the dynastic structure becomes the

[20] Cf. Georgacoupoulou 2005, 240f.

[21] On Augustus as political model of Domitian cf. Nauta 2002a, 352f., 390f., 432; on the model of Augustan literary patronage, 82ff. and Nauta 2007a.

vehicle for the passage of power from one emperor to another, thus critically focusing attention on the problem of succession and the *family* as the symbolic place and space within which the problems of power and of the conflicts associated with it develop. It goes without saying that the myth of Thebes offered an ideal framework, the most obvious and symbolically transparent one, to reflect not only on the drama of the civil war which had shaken Roman history from Sulla to the year of the four emperors, but also on the deadly conflicts which, in the specific environment of the family, had marked the Julio-Claudian dynasty in the passage of power from one emperor to another.

The *Thebaid* is a poem about genealogy, about posterity, and the weight of tradition (the *longa retro series,* 1.7); and posterity is seen as a repetition (the repetition of a series of horrors overshadows the history of Thebes and its ruling family, like a condemnation, an inescapable curse). But the weight of tradition is felt, more than in any other literary genre, in epic, both because at the beginning of everything, and of literary tradition itself, there is an epic poet, Homer, and as a result of the central position that is recognised for epic texts within the cultural and educational structures of the ancient world. Thus, writing epic poetry means, first of all, coming to grips with tradition; and repetition is also the dominant characteristic of Flavian epic, and of that of Statius himself, who appears to complain on various occasions of this condemnation to repetition, his belatedness, his 'secondariness',[22] the condition to which he is condemned by coming 'after the greats', after Augustan epics.

The idea of a cumbersome past, by which the whole of the future is conditioned, overshadows not only the family of Oedipus, but also political life during the Flavian Age, as well as Flavian epic, and in particular the poetic consciousness of Statius. Just as the problem of succession, the transmission of the power of Oedipus to his sons, is the mainspring of the tragedy of Thebes, in the same way (after profoundly influencing the lengthy principate of Augustus, who was continually in search of a suitable successor), it deeply torments the whole history of the Julio-Claudian dynasty and the passage to the

[22] See esp. Hinds 1998, 91ff.

Flavians; but it also finds a precise correspondence in the literary field, and in particular in epic poetry.[23]

Besides political power, there also exists a ‘literary power’, together with the forms by means of which it is wielded: this is confirmed by a metaphor like that of *regnare*, which leads, for example, Statius himself to define Pindar as *regnator lyricae cohortis* “ruler of the lyric band” (Stat. *Silv.* 4.7.5), and Quintilian to state that Cicero *ab hominibus aetatis suae regnare in iudiciis dictus est* “his contemporaries said that Cicero was king of the courts” (*Inst.* 10.1.112). Furthermore, also the term *auctor* possesses a specifically political meaning (there is no need to recall that it comes from the same root as *Augustus*, and that *auctoritas* is one of the cardinal values of Roman culture), and this is clearly not effaced in the use of the term in a literary sense, to indicate the *auctores* that a writer considers as his ‘authorities’, by whom he expects to be legitimated as their heir and successor in their sphere of competence. Literary power too, as well as political power, is transmitted and inherited; the idea of succession within a homogeneous typological series, as a literary genre, is mirrored in formulations such as, e.g., the one where Ovid draws the sequence of the Latin elegists (*Tr.* 4.10.53f. *successor fuit hic* [scil. *Tibullus*] *tibi, Galle, Propertius illi; / quartus ab his serie temporis ipse fui*), and perpetuated by the scholastic practice of the canons.

Succession to the most prestigious literary throne, that of epic poetry, is a problem that runs through Latin culture of the imperial age: writing epic after Virgil means competing with the *Aeneid*; but, in contrast with the beliefs of a long, deeply-rooted critical tradition, this confrontation is by no means a supine acquiescence: it is also a problematic and critical one, and undoubtedly it is hardly disinterested. After the ‘murder of the father’ Virgil at the hands of Lucan (who, in order to achieve his aim, had ‘gigantified’ him, presenting himself as an antagonist on a level with him), the strategy adopted by the Flavians is basically not very different, even if it may seem to be the opposite: deifying Virgil means also turning him into a museum piece: making an unattainable classic out of him means placing him at a distance, and thus in a certain sense, getting rid of him (in one’s own interest, of course: because ‘following in his footsteps’ means minting

23 On the theme of poetic succession in ancient epic cf. esp. Hardie 1993, 101ff.

the currency by which one will be judged oneself, and is a way of appropriating him, replacing him and inheriting his role).[24]

In other words, the discussion of the place to be assigned to Virgil is part of a process of canonisation (let us not forget that the Flavian age is marked by the figure of Quintilian, who carried out the most systematic and lucid process of canonisation of all Latin literary culture).[25] As Glenn Most puts it, “it is not accidental that questions of canonisation tend to be raised in moments of political fragmentation and conflicts of legitimacy”;[26] and we know that throughout the Flavian age there is a serious problem of political legitimacy for the family which had succeeded to the Julio-Claudian dynasty, after the civil conflicts of the ‘year of the four emperors’, a family which was *obscura … quidem ac sine ullis maiorum imaginibus* “obscure and without family portraits” (Suet. *Ves*. 1). The problem of the lack of *auctoritas* is the one which creates the most trouble for Vespasian, immediately after his unexpected rise to power (*Auctoritas et quasi maiestas quaedam ut scilicet inopinato et adhuc nouo principi deerat* “Vespasian as yet lacked prestige and a certain divinity, so to speak, since he was an unexpected and still new-made emperor” *Ves*. 7.2).[27]

2) Phaethon and paternal legitimacy

The problem of succession, and consequently of legitimacy, leads us to examine another point in the *Thebaid*, which I find particularly significant from this point of view. Let us go back to the proem, and to the homage that the poet renders to the emperor. In announcing the topic of his work, he justifies the choice of a mythological subject by confessing his own inadequacy to celebrate the warlike achievements of Domitian (this is the typical *recusatio* that Augustan poets had used in order to avoid any obligations of political poetry): a task that is postponed to an indefinite future (which will never arrive), when the poet feels “more inspired”. The embarrassment of the refusal is dis-

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[24] “The *Thebaid*’s successful imitation of the *Aeneid* may result in a measure of self-divinisation”, Hardie 1993, 110.

[25] That things, as Barchiesi 2001b, 316 observes, have gone differently from their intentions – i.e. that Virgil’s ‘sanctification’ has relegated Flavian epicists to a minority and epigonal position – is of course another matter.

[26] Most 1990, 54.

[27] Translation by Rolfe 1914.

guised by a hyperbolic homage to Domitian; a homage that lends itself, however, to a certain ambiguity:

tuque, o Latiae decus addite famae
quem noua maturi subeuntem exorsa parentis
aeternum sibi Roma cupit (licet artior omnes
limes agat stellas et te plaga lucida caeli,
Pliadum Boreaeque et hiulci fulminis expers,
sollicitet, licet ignipedum frenator equorum
ipse tuis alte radiantem crinibus arcum
imprimat aut magni cedat tibi Iuppiter aequa
parte poli), maneas hominum contentus habenis,
undarum terraeque potens, et sidera dones.

(Stat. *Theb.*1.22–31)

And you, glory added to Latium's fame, whom, as you take on your aged father's enterprises anew, Rome wishes hers for eternity (though a narrower path move all the planets and a radiant tract of heaven invite you, free of Pleiades and Boreas and forked lightning; though the curber of the fire-footed horses himself set his high-shining halo on your locks or Jupiter yield you an equal portion of the broad sky) may you remain content with the governance of mankind, potent over sea and land, and waive the stars.

The immediate model of this encomium to the emperor (which has its archetype in the celebration of Octavian in the proem to the *Georgics* (1.24–42)) is the famous dedication to Nero at the beginning of Lucan's poem:

te, cum statione peracta
astra petes serus, praelati regia caeli
excipiet gaudente polo: seu sceptra tenere
seu te flammigeros Phoebi conscendere currus
telluremque nihil mutato sole timentem
igne uago lustrare iuuet, tibi numine ab omni
cedetur, iurisque tui natura relinquet
quis deus esse uelis, ubi regnum ponere mundi.

(Luc. 1.45–52)

When your watch on earth is over and you seek the stars at last, the celestial palace you prefer will welcome you, and the sky will be glad. Whether you choose to wield Jove's sceptre, or to mount the fiery chariot of Phoebus and circle earth with your moving flame – earth unterrified by the transference of the sun; every god will give place to you,

> and Nature will leave it to you to determine what deity you wish to be, and where to establish your universal throne.[28]

The encomiastic cliché shared by the two poets establishes that at the deification of the emperor, after his death (which, in accordance with the topos, the poet hopes will be as far removed in the future as possible), the new god occupies in heaven the space that the other gods grant him, either by leaving, or reducing, their own space. In the words of Lucan, Nero can choose what position to occupy and which god he will be: he may be either Jupiter (who wields the sceptre of absolute power) or Apollo, whose flaming chariot sweeps across the heavenly vault. The likening of Nero to Apollo will undoubtedly gratify the emperor's desire to be identified with this god: we know from Suetonius (*Nero* 53) that he was celebrated as the "equal of Apollo in music, and of the Sun in driving a chariot";[29] as regards the sun, a heavenly body which is generally associated with a complex symbology of monarchic power,[30] of Oriental origin, it is a well-known fact that during Nero's reign there was a widespread increase in the use of its image in connection with the young emperor.[31] However, the specification that the earth will not have anything to fear from the 'new Sun', together with the description of the 'wandering' (*uago*) of its fiery chariot, inevitably evokes memories of the story in which the earth was afraid for its survival, in the face of the blaze provoked by the Sun's chariot running out of control, and invoked the intervention of Jupiter, who, in order to save the cosmos from destruction, flung a thunderbolt at the inexperienced charioteer of the 'new Sun', that is to say Phaethon (Ov. *Met.* 2.272ff.).[32]

In fact, raising the spectre of Phaethon while addressing the emperor-leader of the world seems hardly an opportune move;[33] and the cautionary reassurance that earth will not have to fear from his leadership seems to reveal the poet's consciousness of running a risk. It is as if, after rendering due homage to the emperor by calling him the 'new

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[28] Translation by Duff 1928.
[29] Translation by Rolfe 1914. Cf. Lebek 1976, 86; Narducci 2002, 26f.
[30] See Bergmann 1998.
[31] Cf. Bergmann 1998, 133ff.
[32] The reference to Phaethon, already caught by the scholiasts, is beyond doubt (*pace* Dewar 1994, 211), and is clearly confirmed by Statius' imitation, as we will see later. On this much debated passage cf. also Hinds 1987, 28f.; Lovatt 2005, 38f.
[33] Cf. Hinds 1987, 28.

Sun', Lucan must neutralise the image that this association inevitably evokes by making him a successful Phaethon.[34] In a similar way, Statius himself in *Silv.* 4.3.136–8 flatters Domitian by declaring him better than nature itself and asserting that, if he *flammigeros teneret axes* (i.e. if he were to drive the chariot of the Sun),[35] he would not provoke Phaethon's disaster, but, by contrast, would improve the earth's climate. The risky comparison between Domitian and Phaethon, in other words, is aptly turned to the emperor's advantage. That Phaethon must have represented long since the model of the emperor as an incompetent leader dragging the world towards a catastrophe is well documented. Biographical tradition attributes to the wit of the elderly Tiberius, lucidly conscious of the character of the young Caligula, a statement that defines him as the future "Phaethon of the world":

> quod sagacissimus senex ita prorsus perspexerat, ut aliquotiens praedicaret exitio suo omniumque Gaium uiuere et se natricem populo Romano, Phaethontem orbi terrarum educare.
>
> (Suet. *Cal.* 11)

> This last was so clearly evident to the shrewd old man, that he used to say now and then that to allow Gaius to live would prove the ruin of himself and of all men, and that he was rearing a viper for the Roman people and a Phaethon for the world.[36]

This image of Phaethon as an inefficient leader of the world appears to be quite familiar to Seneca,[37] and must already have been widespread in Hellenistic literature on kingship,[38] thus immediately recognisable for readers of imperial poetry.[39]

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[34] Whether mentioning a peril in order to negate it is a cautious attitude, or rather a counterproductive one, is of course quite another matter.

[35] But others take *flammigeros axes* as referring to the sky ('the flaming sky' Shackleton Bailey); cf. van Dam 1992, 204 n. 37. In favour of a reference to the chariot of the Sun: Smolenaars 2006, 238–9.

[36] Translation by Rolfe 1914.

[37] As degl'Innocenti Pierini 1990, 251ff. has fully illustrated. On the other hand, in Seneca we read also a positive evaluation of Phaethon as symbol of youthful courage and enthusiasm: cf., after Chevallier 1982, 402, esp. Duret 1988.

[38] Cf. e.g. Dio Chrys. *Orat.* 1.46 (delivered in the first years of Trajan's principate), to be connected with the treatise attributed to the Pythagorean Ecphantus from Syracuse (V cent. B.C.E.), but generally dated to the Hellenistic age or later (cf. Squilloni 1991, 35–60, who proposes to date it to I–II century C.E.): they share the idea that only legitimate kings can stand the bright light of the Sun, that is of the royal office (and Phaethon, who cannot, is adduced as a symbol of the evil king). A trace of it can also be seen in Seneca's *Cl.* 1.8.4 *Multa contra te lux est* (cf. Duret 1988, 145f.

When Statius, in a proem so largely indebted to Lucan as a model, also repeats the pattern of the alternative that awaits the future god Domitian – only inverting the order: he may become either Apollo (27–9) or Jupiter (29f.)[40] – he is clearly recalling the paradigm of Phaethon, even if he does not explicitly mention it. In Statius, the one who pays homage to the new god, and crowns him, is the Sun himself, who is described as "the curber of the fire-footed horses" (*ignipedum frenator equorum*), a definition which underlines his function as the driver of the heavenly chariot, and is a clear case of borrowing from the poem, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, which had narrated the disastrous career of the horses entrusted to the inexperienced Phaethon (*ignipedum uires expertus equorum*, 2.392).[41]

A first observation can be made. The topical encomiastic motif *serus in* caelum *redeas* ("don't rush back to the sky", 1.22ff.) is presented here in an unusual form: the exhortation addressed by the poet to the future god, which in the encomiastic tradition is an invitation to delay his ascent to the sky, and to prolong the benefit of his presence on earth for the advantage of his subjects, runs the risk of assuming a completely different meaning in the mythical framework created by the Ovidian allusion. Exhorting the aspiring 'new Sun' to "remain content with the governance of mankind" (*hominum contentus habenis*) means inviting him to be moderate and to give up his divine claims (being happy to wield absolute power on earth, and to *donare sidera* to the others, that is to say, to deify his relations); it means repeating to him the warning that Phaethon's father had given his young, impulsive son in vain (2.50ff.), reminding him of his mortal nature, and warning him not to nourish excessive ambitions (*sors tua mortalis, non est mortale quod optas*, 2.56: this had been the warning

and 151). See also Fears 1977, 153ff., who insists on the importance of divine election as a guarantee for the legitimacy of emperorship; this idea, which has a central presence in Pliny's *Panegyric*, just around the end of the 1st century C.E. (not by chance, that is with the first of the 'adoptive emperors') became "a major element in official imperial ideology".

[39] A possible reference to Phaethon (as a figure of the young Octavian) has also been suggested in the famous simile, at the end of Virgil's *Georgics* book I (512–4), of the world chariot wandering after Caesar's murder: cfr. Lyne 1987, 140 n. 63. Cf. also the competition piece for the *ludi Capitolini* of 94 C.E. by the boy Q. Sulpicius Maximus (*IGUR* 3.1336) as interpreted by Nauta 2002a, 332–3.

[40] Likely, according to Lebek 1976, 87, due to the different importance of the two gods as models for Domitian.

[41] These are the only two occurrences of the compound *ignipes*.

that the Sun had given his son in Ovid). This is all the more significant because in this perspective, the moral function of this myth must already have been consolidated for some time: the invitation to moderation was already associated with the model of Phaethon in Horace (*Carm.* 4.11.25–31), and subsequently it often returns, after Ovid (*Tr.* 3.4.25ff.), especially in the moral considerations of Seneca's tragedies (*Med.* 599ff.; *Her. O.* 678ff.).[42] But this allegorical function of the character probably dates back to Greek culture, and must have been rooted in the political reading of Phaethon as the model of the bad ruler; a reading which does not appear to be attested before the imperial age, but probably has far more ancient origins.

But there is a second aspect to consider, which is more important for us in the discussion on succession. In Statius' text – unlike his model Lucan – together with the other heavenly gods who are preparing the apotheosis of Domitian, there is Phoebus-Apollo, who crowns the head of the new god with a halo of light (which obviously represents, in the encomiastic symbology, the sign that the apotheosis has taken place). The arc of light (*radiantem … arcum*) that is placed on the head of the new god has been variously interpreted, but has mainly been seen as a possible touch of irony at Domitian's expense: either referring to his mania (documented by his biographers) for building 'arches' in Rome, or as a reference to the emperor's obsession with his problem of baldness.[43] I do not think that this is at stake here, but that we should read the passage in quite another key. Apollo crowning Domitian's head with the nimbus – the halo of rays that emperors normally wore on their heads (cf. Plin. *Pan.* 52.1) as a sign of their solar divinity[44] – recalls the gesture of Ovid's Sun who prepares Phaethon for his disastrous ride across the skies:

> tum pater ora sui sacro medicamine nati
> contigit et rapidae fecit patientia flammae
> inposuitque comae radios.[45]
>
> (Ov. *Met.* 2.122ff.)

> Then on his son's young face the father smeared a magic salve to shield him from the heat, and set the flashing sunbeams on his head.[46]

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[42] Cf. Chevallier 1982, 401f. and Duret 1988, 142f.

[43] Cf. Ahl 1986, 2820 and Dominik 1994, 175.

[44] On the nimbus cf. Bergmann 1998, *passim*; it will become (since the end of the III century C.E.) a standard feature of imperial iconography: cf. Alföldi 1999, 49.

[45] The same image in Nonnus, *Dion.* 38.291f.

The rays that crown his head are obviously the symbol of command, which makes Phaethon the 'new Sun'; but how are we to interpret this image in the passage by Statius? Compared with Lucan's text, the addition (which may reveal that a 'correction' of the model was felt to be necessary, or opportune)[47] introduced by Statius with the crowning of Phaethon by his father seems to have important political implications, which transfer the emphasis to another aspect of this character.

We know that according to an ancient version of the myth (whose evidence is not so good in the main sources, but for which substantial indications can be collected),[48] Phaethon did not obtain the chariot of the Sun by his father as proof of his parentage, as in Ovid's version, but took possession of it *without authorisation*, bringing death and destruction everywhere until Jupiter struck him with his thunderbolt and restored the world order. According to this version Phaethon is no longer an allegory of the youthfully impulsive emperor, incapable of governing the fortunes of the world, but a usurper, who seizes his father's power by illegal means, with catastrophic consequences (there are thus clear affinities between this story and the thematic framework of the poem that contains it). A clear proof of it we read in the mythographer Hyginus, who beside the more common, Ovidian version (154.1 *impetratis curribus*, "the chariot he asked for"), attests also to this different one:

> Phaethon Solis et Clymenes filius cum *clam* patris currum conscendisset et altius a terra esset elatus, prae timore decidit in flumen Eridanum […] At sorores Phaethontis, quod equos *iniussu patris* iunxerant, in arbores populos commutatae sunt.
>
> (Hyg. *Fab.* 152.1)
>
> Phaethon, son of Sol and Clymene, who had secretely mounted his father's car, and had been borne too high above the earth, from fear fell into the river Eridanus … But the sisters of Phaethon, because they had yoked the horses without the orders of their father, were changed into poplar trees.[49]

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46 Translation by Melville 1986.

47 Is Statius' reading of Lucan a tendentious one? Does he (as a delator) correct Lucan's text by showing how dangerous, how tricky it could be, and thus making a profession of loyalism? Or does his reading end by enhancing its subversive potentialities?

48 Cf. Gantz 1993, 33, who inclines to credit this version to Aischylos' *Heliades*.

49 Translation by Grant 1960.

In this version the myth (whose political value is of course no less evident in comparison with the alternative one) appears as an example of rebellion against established authority;[50] Phaethon is no more the impulsive and inexperienced youth, but the ambitious rebel, who is therefore struck by Jupiter's thunderbolt, the very symbol of established authority. This seems to be, for example, the reason for Jupiter's "fierce anger" in the reference to the myth by Lucretius:

> At pater omnipotens ira tum percitus acri
> magnanimum Phaethonta repenti fulminis ictu
> deturbauit equis in terram, Solque cadenti
> obuius aeternam succepit lampada mundi
> disiectosque redegit equos iunxitque trementis,
> inde suum per iter recreauit cuncta gubernans,
> scilicet ut ueteres Graium cecinere poetae.[51]
>
> (Lucr. 5.399–405)

> But the almighty Father, stirred then with fierce anger, crashed down ambitious Phaëthon from his car to the earth with a sudden thunderbolt, and the Sun, meeting his fall, caught up from him the everlasting lamp of the world, and bringing back the scattered horses yoked them in trembling, and then guiding them on their proper path restored all again – that, you know, is the tale which the old Grecian poets have sung.[52]

Although a minority in the preserved sources, this version of Phaethon's myth, and the political reading connected to it, seems to have become canonical, especially in panegyrics (e.g. Claud. *VI Cons. Hon.* 185–92),[53] and enjoys widespread fortune in the figurative tradition until the modern age. Anyway, for Statius' readers the Phaethon paradigm must have been quite familiar: when, e.g., in the chariot race of the *Thebaid*'s sixth book, Polynices' ride is compared to Phaethon's, this stands as a clear symbol of the bad leader, and his catastrophic guidance is an omen for the tragic destiny of Thebes.[54] Like Phaethon, Polynices too is worried about his origins (as son of

[50] Cf. also *Theb.* 1.219–21, as discussed by Hill in this volume, 133.

[51] *Magnanimus* thus is probably to be seen as 'over-ambitious' (Costa 1984, *ad loc.*). Hardie 1986, 184 n. 72, notes the similarities between Lucretius' Phaethon and Salmoneus (who passed himself off as Jupiter, by displaying his symbols and attributes) of *A.* 6.585ff.

[52] Translation by Rouse-Smith 1975.

[53] Cf. Dewar 1996, 170 and 184. Cf. also *Ruf.* 2, 211ff.; Chevallier 1982, 403 and 413ff.

[54] On Phaethon as a figure of Polynices, who "overturns the cosmos of the *Thebaid*", cf. Lovatt 2005, 32ff.

Oedipus): he tries to abandon his Theban past, and to integrate himself into the house of Adrastus, his father-in-law, but realizes that he is cursed by his own paternity.[55] First of all, therefore, Phaethon's myth was to appear as linked with the idea of the legitimacy of imperial power: as Newlands puts it, "for a post-Neronian reader […] the usurpation of the Sun's chariot must surely have linked the concept of imperial majesty with transgressive power and fear of civic dissolution."[56]

Within this framework, then, Statius' specification that it is the Sun who crowns his young son and successor is probably an attempt to satisfy the desire of Domitian to see his legitimacy as emperor recognised, and to dispel possible malignant insinuations about the way in which he rose to power. We know from Suetonius that after the sudden death of his father Vespasian, he

> numquam iactare dubitauit relictum se participem imperii, sed fraudem testamento adhibitam
>
> (Suet. *Dom*. 2.3)
>
> he never had any compunction about saying that he had been left a partner in the imperial power, but that the will had been tampered with.[57]

And we also know that for the whole of the brief reign of Titus, he continued to plot against his brother, with the aim of becoming his successor on the throne.[58] It comes as no surprise, therefore, that he should have been particularly concerned about the problem of his legitimation as the emperor on the throne of Rome; and that Statius, with his tools as a poet, should have seconded this sensitivity of the emperor. The gesture of the Sun who crowns his son is thus an act of investiture, a 'ceremony of succession' and transmission of power,[59]

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55 "For both Phaethon and Polynices, it is not only their own identity which is at stake: their struggle over their paternities draws in the whole world": Lovatt 2005, 34.

56 Newlands 2002, 315.

57 Translation by Rolfe 1914.

58 Cf. also Suet. *Tit.* 9.3 and *Dom.* 13.1 *principatum uero adeptus neque in senatu iactare dubitauit et patri se et fratri imperium dedisse, illos sibi reddidisse.* On cold relationships between the two imperial brothers, and in particular Domitian's impatience with Titus, see Jones 1992, 19–21 (who insists however on tendentiousness and bias of our sources) and, better, Gsell 1894, 26ff. and 39f.

59 The idea of a reassuring family continuity, from Vespasian to his two sons, is an important issue of Flavian propaganda: cf. Girard 1987; Levick 1999, 184ff.; Leberl 2004, 58–60 and 154. Cf. also Jos. *BJ* 4.596f. "for neither senate nor Roman people

as is confirmed by the astonishing phrase of v. 23: “as you take on your aged father’s enterprises anew”. The direct succession from Vespasian to Domitian cuts off the principate of Titus, and Domitian is the immediate, legitimate heir of his father. It is striking indeed, at the opening of a poem whose subject is the deadly fight between two brothers for power, this ‘removal of the brother’[60] – a real ***damnatio memoriae***, which could hardly displease the new emperor who was intolerant of praises of the old one (cf. Cassius Dio 67.2.5 “Some, however, would praise Titus, though not in Domitian's hearing (for to do that would have been as grave an offence as to revile the emperor in his presence and within his hearing)…”). Domitian therefore is anything but a usurper: he is not just a legitimate son of the Sun-god, but is his appointed successor.[61]

A clear correspondence thus emerges between the opening and the closing of the ***Thebaid***, which symmetrically enact two ceremonies of succession and legitimation: the political one of Domitian in the prologue, and then in the epilogue the literary one of Statius, who succeeds his ‘father’ Virgil. Anyway, the poet’s homage to the emperor is hardly disinterested: it is a sample of a more general negotiation Statius is proposing to political power: he is suggesting a political role for himself, as celebrator of the emperor, in exchange for imperial patronage. In its programmatic spaces, prologue and epilogue, the ***Thebaid*** symbolically stages this mutual exchange between the poet conferring the honour and the imperial recipient. On this point, in the common interest in obtaining a legitimacy (and an official succession), political power and literary power could for once agree.

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would […] prefer as president […] a childless prince to a father, since the very best security for peace lies in a legitimate succession to the throne”.

[60] A significant (contrastive) connection with the final scene, about which cf. Hardie 1997, 158: “This little narrative of pious obeisance to a poetic monarch (Virgil) and orderly inheritance from a poetic master (Statius) is the complete opposite of the Theban tale that we have just read”.

[61] By an irony of destiny, the fortunes of Domitian, like those of Phaethon, as we learn from Suetonius, were believed to have been decided by a series of thunderbolts that fell on the places and symbols of his power during the last few months of his life (***Dom.*** 15.2 ***Continuis octo mensibus tot fulgura facta nuntiataque sunt, ut exclamauerit: ‘feriat iam, quem uolet’***).

DUST, WATER AND SWEAT: THE STATIAN *PUER* BETWEEN CHARM AND WEAKNESS, PLAY AND WAR*

Lorenzo Sanna

In this paper I discuss some of the many elements composing the ambiguous and fascinating figure of the numerous ephebic heroes in Statius' epos and generally in the whole of Flavian epic: the presence and meaning of *puluis* on the bodies of the child-heroes and the meaning of one of the *puer*'s preferred surroundings, that is to say water, dangerous rivers or clear fountains.

Starting, then, with dust, we often find it as part of the contrasts constituting the 'oxymoronic' aspects of the Flavian *pueri*, epic protagonists while still in their childhood. They are usually as luxuriously and elegantly attired as the contemporaneous *delicati*; they are also marked by the teenage feature of indistinct sex and disposition.[1] Dust, often combined with sweat, stresses the child hero's charm: his sweaty and dusty body strikes the imagination and is highly seductive; the *puer's* delicate and white body covered in *puluis belli* acquires a fascinating and heroic status. All the same, sweat and dust are only aesthetic details, the elements of an ambiguity that is often fatal to the *puer* in battle.

Traditionally, and not only in epic, dust belongs to the topical context of war.[2] Together with blood and sweat it constitutes one of the most evident marks of battle on the hero's body:

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1 On the importance of the theme of ephebic beauty in Statius and Martial cf. La Penna 2000, 65–168.

2 Topical, for instance, the juncture *puluis belli* (Stat. *Theb.* 10.729 *medio de puluere belli*; cf. *Silv.* 5.1.132 *puluerea bellorum nube*; V.Fl. 2.419 *puluere pugnae*).

> Quantus equis quantusque uiris in puluere crasso
> sudor! Io quanti crudele rubebitis amnes!
>
> (*Theb.* 3.210–1)

> What sweat in muddy dust for horses and for men! Ah, how high shall rivers be cruelly reddened![3]

> belli sudore calens, clipeumque cruentis
> roribus et scissi respersus puluere campi.
>
> (*Theb.* 8.7–8)

> warm with the sweat of war, his shield bespattered with bloody drops and the dust of the torn plain.

> puluis sudorque cruorque per artus
> mixtus adhuc
>
> (*Theb.* 10.37–8)

> dust, sweat and blood still mingled on their bodies

Sweat and dust accompany the hero's wartime sufferings, as in the case of Turnus, who, weary, dirty and tired, later feels restored and purified by the river's water (Verg. *A.* 9.812–8),[4] or Tydeus on his return from Thebes:[5]

> terribilis uisu: stant fulti puluere crines,
> squalidus ex umeris cadit alta in uulnera sudor
> insomnisque oculos rubor excitat, oraque retro
> soluit anhela sitis; mens altum spirat honorem
> conscia factorum
>
> (*Theb.* 3.326–30)

> fearsome he to behold. His hair stands up propped by dust, soiled sweat pours from his shoulders into his deep wounds, redness inflames his sleepless eyes, panting thirst sucks back his breath, but his spirit, conscious of his deeds, breathes high honour.

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[3] These and other translations of Statius are taken from Shackleton Bailey 2003.

[4] *…tum toto corpore sudor / liquitur et piceum (nec respirare potestas) /flumen agit; fessos quatit aeger anhelitus artus. / Tum demum praeceps saltu sese omnibus armis / in fluuium dedit: ille suo cum gurgite flauo / accepit uenientem ac mollibus extulit undis / et laetum sociis abluta caede remisit.*

[5] Statius' description may show some trace of the portrait of Pompey *deformis* after the wounds sustained in battle (Luc. 8.56–7 *deformem pallore ducem uultusque prementem / canitiem atque atro squalentis puluere uestis*; cf. Stat. *Theb.* 4.590 *… saeuo puluere sordens / Oenomaus*; 6.872–4 *…contra non integer ille / flatibus alternis aegroque effetus hiatu / exuit ingestas fluuio sudoris harenas*).

Likewise, we often find the dust of war ‘soiling’ the beautiful faces of the lovely and effeminate child-heroes,[6] starting from the *semiuir Phrygius* Aeneas, whom Turnus addresses with ironical contempt:[7]

> Da sternere corpus
> loricamque manu ualida lacerare reuolsam
> semiuiri Phrygis et foedare in puluere crinis
> uibratos calidos ferro murraque madentis
>
> (Verg. *A.* 12.97–100)

> Grant me the power to bring down that effeminate Phrygian, to tear the breastplate off his body and rend it with my bare hands, to foul in the dust the hair he has curled with hot steel and steeped in myrrh! (tr. West 1990)

Flavian poetry presents the topical contrast between oriental luxury and elegance and bellicose pride in a variety of situations.[8] I would now like to dwell on two *pueri*, Valerius’ Pollux and Statius’ Alcidamas, in two passages that reveal precise intertextual, lexical and thematic connections. Pollux and Alcidamas are both child-heroes. One is pictured with the first *lanugo* on his beautiful face (V.Fl. 4.233 *uixdum etiam primae spargentem signa iuuentae*), the other is almost still a child (*Theb.* 6.756 *paulo ante puer*), even if endowed with great strength for his tender age (*Theb.* 6.756–7 *maturius aeuo / robur*), according to the recurring *topos* of the *puer delicatus*.[9] Both Pollux

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[6] In Ovid’s elegies, dust can also soil and blemish the fair body of the *puella*: *dum loquor, alba leui sparsa est tibi puluere uestis / sordide de niueo corpore, puluis, abi* (*Am.* 3.2.41–2).

[7] The effeminacy and looseness of morals of the Trojans, used to elegance, dances, inertia (Verg. *A.* 9.615 *desidiae cordi*) and the ‘perverse’ cult of the Great Mother, as opposed to the Italic *durum genus* are the core of Numanus Remulus’ speech to Ascanius (*A.* 9.595–620; cf. Nauta 2007b, 85–6), expressly quoted by Statius in Parthenopaeus’ words to Amphion (*Theb.* 9.790–800).

[8] Cf. the *pueri* Myraces (V.Fl. 6.699–710), Eunaeus (Stat. *Theb.* 7.649–87), Crenaeus (*Theb.* 9.332–8), Atys (*Theb.* 8.564–8), Parthenopaeus (*Theb.* 4.265–70; 6.570; 9.684–99) and Cinyps (Sil. 12.232–3), which represent a perfect fusion of the ambiguous and alluring features of the contemporaneus *puer delicatus* with the reverberations of the epic *topos* of the “oriental” warrior, a model of elegance and luxury, starting from Homer’s Paris (*Il.* 3.16; 6.504; 512; 13.765–9); these boy-heroes are often the victims of fierce enemies more used than they are to the logic of war, like Syenes (V.Fl. 6.703 *saeuum … Syenen*), Capaneus (Stat. *Theb.* 7.669; 675), Tydeus (*Theb.* 8.576–91) and Dryantes (*Theb.* 9.842 *horrendum … Dryanta*).

[9] In Statius’ *Silvae*, for instance, the *delicatus* Glaucias is renowned for his precocious reserve and modesty (*Silv.* 2.1.39–40 *rapit inde modestia praecox / et pudor et tenero probitas maturior aeuo*), and moreover for having surpassed the other boys of his age with a precocious pride both in his face and his demeanour (108–11 *Sic tener*

and Alcidamas have to fight against stronger and dreadful enemies; Pollux, in order to survive, has to fight Amycus, a gigantic and terrible monster (V.Fl. 4.188 *et pauor et monstri subiit absentis imago*; 4.201–2 *mortalia nusquam / signa manent*); Alcidamas, in the boxing match during the funeral games in honour of Opheltes, braves the enormous, dreadful Capaneus (6.731–2 *constitit inmanis cerni inmanisque timeri / Argolicus Capaneus…*). In both passages the opponent's abuse makes clear the contrast between the horrible mortal combat and the ephebe's pure world. The boy's beauty and frailty are plainly inadequate, 'out of place', and must be eliminated, disfigured by those who, in the boxing match, have the role of the *ferus* warrior, the enemy of the boy-hero on the battlefield. Amycus mocks the young age and the ephebic beauty of Pollux. He intends to return the boy's body to his mother disfigured:

> Quisquis es, infelix celeras puer: haud tibi pulchrae
> manserit hoc ultra frontis decus oraue matri
> nota feres. Tune a sociis electus iniquis?
> Tune Amycis moriere manu?
>
> (V.Fl. 4.240–3)

> Make haste, whosoever thou art, unhappy boy; no longer shall the beauty of that fair brow remain to thee, nor shalt thou take back to thy mother the face she knew. Wilt thou, the choice of cruel comrades, wilt die by the hand of Amycus? (tr. Mozley 1934)

Capaneus addresses Tydeus and Hippomedon, who are trying to save Alcidamas' life, furiously and aggressively, perfectly in line with his

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ante diem uultu gressuque superbo / uicerat aequales multumque reliquerat annos. / Siue catenatis curuatus membra palaestris / staret, Amyclaea conceptum matre putares). Also the *puer delicatus* of Flavius Ursus is praised by Statius for *pudor* and an even-tempered mind, more mature than his years (*Silv.* 2.6.48–9 *Nam pudor ingenuae mentis tranquillaque morum / temperies teneroque animus maturior aeuo*). Concerning these two *delicati* the poet compares, among other models, precisely the boxer Pollux (2.1.111 *Amyclaea conceptum matre putares*; 2.6.45–7), and uses phrases almost identical to those in which he refers to Alcidamas (*Theb.* 6.756–7 *maturius aeuo robur*; *Silv.* 2.1.40 *probitas maturior aeuo,* 2.6.49 *animus maturior aeuo*), confirming the presence of just one canon of reference, lexical and thematic, for the *puer delicatus* and for some situations of the boy-hero in the epos; cf. also Achilles' precocious strength (*Ach.* 1.148 *uis festina parat tenuesque superuenit annos)* or Parthenopaeus' premature craving for glory (*Theb.* 9.716 *cruda heu festinaque uirtus*).

character. He too wants to ridicule and eliminate his opponent's ephebic appearance:[10]

> non has ego puluere crasso
> atque cruore genas, metuit quibus ista iuuenta
> semiuiri, foedem, mittamque informe sepulcro
> corpus et Oebalio donem lugere magistro?
>
> (*Theb.* 6.819–22)

> These cheeks for the sake of which that effeminate youth is so anxious, shall I not foul with clotted dirt and blood, shall I not send his maimed body to the grave and give it to his Oebalian master to mourn?

Capaneus' words stress the contrast between the ephebe's innocent and ambiguous world and the dust (*Theb.* 6.819 *puluere*), the blood (6.820 *cruore*), the disfigured body (6.821–2 *informe … / corpus*), and finally the grave (6.821 *sepulcro*) and the mourning (6.822 *lugere*). In *Theb.* 6.820 we may notice the antithetic matching of *cruore genas*, where the blood is set side by side with the term properly defining the grace and beauty of the *puer*.[11] It is interesting to point out how Capaneus' words recall those of Virgil, not only in the sarcastic remarks on effeminacy (*Theb.* 6.821 *semiuiri*), like those of Turnus about Aeneas (*A.* 12.99 *semiuiri Phrygis*), but especially in the almost technical use of the verb *foedo* (*A.* 12.99 *…foedare in puluere crinis*; *Theb.* 6.819–21 *non has ego puluere crasso / atque cruore genas … / … foedem*), in its meaning of 'soiling' with the dust of battle the beautiful face of an enemy considered inadequate to fight, because still a child, effeminate or 'oriental'.

Nevertheless, dust and sweat on the child-hero's body and face do not only constitute, in the Flavian epos at least, a negative element of the ephebe's charm. On the contrary, they belong to a typology of beauty based on aesthetic contradictions. Nor does the seductiveness of dust and sweat seem to support Ovidian theorizations on the *forma neglecta* (*Ars* 1.509 *forma uiros neglecta decet…*); rather, they seem

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[10] The text is very contested. I here follow Håkanson 1969, 169–70, who reads *metuit* for *meruit* and takes over Klotz' *semiuiri* for *semiuir*, and I have adapted Shackleton Bailey's translation accordingly.

[11] *Genae* is also found in the portraits of the boys Achilles (*Ach.* 1.351), Parthenopaeus (*Theb.* 4.274 *dulce rubens uiridique genas spectabilis aeuo*; 4.336; *Silv.* 2.6.45; Pac. 362R² *Nunc primum opacat flora lanugo genas:*), Hypanis (*Theb.* 8.492), Atys (*Theb.* 8.653), Castor and Pollux (*Theb.* 5.440 *nudus uterque genas*).

to increase the heroic and warlike characteristics of the *puer*'s *forma uirilis*.

Most emblematic is the case of Statius' Parthenopaeus. In contemporary poetry he often takes on the role of *exemplum* of the moral and aesthetic characteristics of the child-hero.[12] The *puluis belli* accompanies all the events in the *puer*'s life. It characterizes his appearance, his dreams and his fatal delusions.[13] From the first time Parthenopaeus is portrayed, dust is the ideal setting of the child-hero's dreams of glory. In the dreamlike atmosphere of battle, where weapons clang and trumpets blast,[14] he innocently dreams of wallowing in the dust of the battlefield, with his blond locks, and of returning in triumph, riding a beautiful horse taken from the enemy:

> Prosilit audaci Martis percussus amore,
> arma, tubas audire calens et puluere belli
> flauentem sordere comam captoque referri
> hostis equo
>
> (*Theb.* 4.260–3)

> Forth he dashes, smitten by Mars' audacious ardour, burning to hear arms and trumpets and soil his yellow hair with the dust of battle and return on a foeman's captured horse.

The hero's childish innocence appears to us not only in his teenage looks,[15] but also from his temper and his enthusiasm for a war which seems devoid of ideals and even devoid of the cruelty of blood and danger, more like a children's game,[16] a sort of escape from the tedium of hunting and wandering in the woods:[17]

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[12] Cf. *Silv.* 2.6.41–5; Mart. 6.77.2, 9.56.5–8, 10.4.3–7; Vessey 1973, 294–302; Delarue 1974, 540–3; Verstraete 1989, 407; Micozzi 1998, 95–123; La Penna 2000, 141–56.

[13] And again dust closes once and for all the life of Atalanta's young son, when, just before dying, he turns his last thoughts to his faraway mother and imagines her desperately scanning the horizon, in the vain hope of detecting a sign of life from her son, the dust stirred by his army (*Theb.* 9.895–7 *…frustra de colle Lycaei / anxia prospectas, si quis per nubila longe / aut sonus aut nostro sublatus ab agmine puluis*).

[14] Vessey 1973, 299: "It is plain that he takes a boyish delight in the glamorous accessories of war, and that he does not understand its real horror."

[15] Cf. for instance *Theb.* 4.246–55; 274 *dulce rubens uiridique genas spectabilis aeuo*, 335–7 *Exspecta, dum maior honos, dum firmius aeuum, / dum roseis uenit umbra genis uultusque recedunt / ore mei ...*

[16] In a dramatic climax, *uirtus*, the supreme heroic value which subsumes the *puer*'s own weaknesses, is labelled in fact as *improba* (*Theb.* 4.319), *tenuissima* (6.551) and *cruda* (9.716), "wrong, excessive", "of no count", lastly "immature". Cf. also *Theb.* 4.318 *furibunda cupido*; Ripoll 1998, 321–2 alludes to a "conception

taedet nemorum, titulumque nocentem
sanguinis humani pudor est nescire sagittas

(*Theb.* 4.263–4)

He is weary of the woods and ashamed that his arrows know not the guilty glory of human blood.

Dust and sweat appear again at the close of the description of the spectacular charm of the *puer* in battle: elegant, splendid and wrapped in golden and purple clothes (*Theb.* 9.690–9),[18] he shows his sweet and beardless face:

tunc dulce comae radiisque trementes
dulce nitent uisus et, quas dolet ipse morari,
nondum mutatae rosea lanugine malae.

(*Theb.* 9.701–3)

Then his locks shine sweetly and sweetly his eyes in their tremulous radiance and his cheeks whose tardiness vexes himself, not yet changed by rosy down.

His seductive body is covered in sweat and dust (*Theb.* 9.710 *sudore et puluere gratum*):[19]

… Dat sponte locum Thebana iuuentus,
natorum memores, intentaque tela retorquent;
sed premit et saeuas miserantibus ingerit hastas.
Illum et Sidoniae iuga per Teumesia Nymphae
bellantem atque ipso sudore et puluere gratum
laudant, et tacito ducunt suspiria uoto.

(*Theb.* 9.706–11)

Unbidden the Theban soldiery, remembering their sons, make way for him, and turn away the weapons that they hold poised; but he presses hard upon them and, though they pity him, he assails them with his merciless javelins. Him even the Sidonian nymphs along the ridges of Teumesus praise as he fights, winning favour by the very dust and sweat, and they breathe out in sighs the prayer they cannot speak. (tr. Dewar 1991)

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ludique de la guerre" on Parthenopaeus' part; Eisenhut 1973, 166, considers the hero's *improba uirtus* a sign of his immorality.

17 Cf. also *Theb.* 9.739–43.

18 Sanna 2004, 287–97.

19 Some useful indications are to be found in Dewar 1991, 192, who also quotes Claudian's recuperation of Statius' expression (*III Cons. Hon.* 37 *grato respersus puluere belli*).

While Parthenopaeus, still in the middle of a dreamlike mixture of emotions, games and childish fantasies, goes on to a deceptive *aristeia*,[20] refusing praise for his pure beauty, the poet confirms the nature of the child-hero and his sweet[21] and delicate charm, which is such that it arouses the pity of the Thebans. Indeed, in the hero's ephebic features (9.706–7) they see their own children (*natorum memores*), and the passions of the nymphs are inflamed (9.709–11)[22] by the contrast between the ambiguous and feminine beauty and the sweat and dust covering the soldier's body (*ipso sudore et puluere gratum*).

Just as for the aesthetic model of the *puer delicatus* and the fashions and the literary styles of the Flavian age the influence of the imperial court[23] and of the *exemplum* of the *puer Caesareus* Earinus[24] is quite plain, in this case we can set Statius' picture of the fascinating Parthenopaeus, "beautified" by the dust of war,[25] alongside the *exemplum* of Domitian. Indeed, one of Martial's epigrams describes the return of a splendid and victorious emperor from the Sarmatian cam-

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[20] From the start the poet warns the reader, alternating the account of the massacre with questions concerning the actual merits of Parthenopaeus, in order to provide a further contrast between the hypnotic state of the *puer* and the actual facts; Parthenopaeus' endeavour is only the result of Diana's protection and *caelestia tela* (*Theb.* 9.752–3 *…sed diuum fortia quid non /tela queant?*; 770–1 *Numquam cassa manus, nullum sine numine fugit /missile*; 772–3 *…unum quis crederet arcum /aut unam saeuire manum?...*).

[21] Cf. the anaphora of *dulce* in *Theb.* 9.701–2.

[22] Nymphs who had already fallen in love with the *puer* in Arcadia (*Theb.* 4.254–5). The theme of the nymphs' falling in love with handsome boys is a *topos* (e.g. Theoc. 13.48–9, where the nymphs fall in love with Hylas); it is also to be found in Flavian epic in the sories of Crenaeus (V.Fl. 3.181) and Lapithaon (Stat. *Theb.* 7.297–300), as well as in the *Achilleid*, where the nymphs weep upon Achilles' departure, bewailing their vanishing hope for long awaited nuptials (*Ach.* 1.241 *et sperata diu plorant conubia Nymphae*).

[23] In the Flavian age there is a special consonance of themes and images between iconography, epic poetry, epigrammatic poetry and occasional poems, also contributing to a process of moral legitimation and aesthetic sublimation of the *puer* and of the homoerotic relationship *dominus-delicatus*; cf. also La Penna 2000, 126–35.

[24] Cf. mainly Stat. *Silv.* 3.4; Mart. 9.11–3; 16–7; 36.

[25] We also find an intimation of the charm of the ephebe manoeuvring in the dust (*uersantem in puluere*) of battle in *Silv.* 5.2.118–24 (*Gaetulo sic pulcher equo Troianaque quassans / tela nouercales ibat uenator in agros / Ascanius miseramque patri flagrabat Elissam; / Troilus haud aliter gyro leuiore minantes / eludebat equos aut quem de turribus altis /Arcadas Ogygio uersantem in puluere metas / spectabant Tyriae non toruo lumine matres*), where the *puer* Crispinus is compared to the *exempla* of the *pulcher* Ascanius, of Troilus and of the fascinating Parthenopaeus (5.2.124 *spectabant Tyriae non toruo lumine matres*).

paign: clad in a pure white garment, his glowing features beautified precisely by the dust of battle:

> Hic stetit Arctoi formosus puluere belli
> purpureum fundens Caesar ab ore iubar;
> hic lauru redimita comas et candida cultu
> Roma salutauit uoce manuque ducem.
>
> (Mart. 8.65.3–6)

> Here stood Caesar, beauteous with the dust of northern warfare, pouring brilliant radiance from his countenance. Here Rome, her hair wreathed with laurel and clothed in white, saluted her Leader with voice and hand. (tr. Shackleton Bailey 1993)

The young hero is brought back to the tragic reality of war by Amphion, who is the first to confront him and ridicules his puerile conceit:

> Quonam usque moram lucrabere fati,
> o multum meritos puer orbature parentes?
> quin etiam menti tumor atque audacia gliscit,
> congressus dum nemo tuos pugnamque minorem
> dignatur bellis, iramque relinqueris infra.
> I, repete Arcadiam mixtusque aequalibus illic,
> dum ferus hic uero desaeuit puluere Mauors,
> proelia lude domi: quodsi te maesta sepulcri
> fama mouet, dabimus, leto moriere uirorum!
>
> (*Theb.* 9.779–87)

> How long will you profit from fate's delay, you boy who will leave sorely bereft your worthy parents? Indeed, in your spirit the swelling pride and rashness grow, while no one holds a duel with you or your trivial fighting worthy of war, and you are left as one below the notice of their wrath. Go, return to Arcadia, and mingling there with boys of your own age, while here fierce Mars rages his fill in the real dust, play battles at home: but if the sad glory of a tomb moves you, we shall grant you one: you shall die by the doom that warriors die. (tr. Dewar 1991)

The words of the Theban warrior address Parthenopaeus' difficult process of maturation and self-awareness. He significantly develops the contrast between the dramatic truth of war, which is fought by courageous and fierce men, and the child-hero's playful pretence of it.[26] Amphion actually stresses the opposition between *ferus Mauors*,

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[26] In this sense *uirorum* of 9.787 concludes Amphion's speech, in sharp contrast with the opening *puer* in 9.780.

which becomes cruel in the dust of real fights (*Theb.* 9.785 *uero…puluere*), and the homely and preparatory wargames of children (9.786 *proelia lude domi*;[27] 784 *mixtus aequalibus*). Especially interesting is the expression *uero puluere*,[28] a polemical quotation of *Theb.* 4.261 and 9.710: Amphion seems to emphasize the difference between the *puluis* of the real bloody clashes of war, and the 'fake' antiheroic *puluis* of the *puer*'s naive phantasies (*Theb.* 4.260–4) or his ambiguous ephebic charms (*Theb.* 9.710–1). For Parthenopaeus, dust is not a heroic element, it is just a matter of charm; it turns out to be fatal, though, because it is precisely his muddling of games and war which leads to his death.

Far from this war background, another child-hero appears. I am talking of Statius' Achilles, who like Parthenopaeus is characterized by an ambiguous beauty, a dazzling contrast of puerile and virile features, of feminine tenderness and precocious male fierceness and strength.[29] Sweat and dust are also to be found in the first surprising appearance of the young hero:

> … Figit gelidus Nereida pallor:
> ille aderat multo sudore et puluere maior,
> et tamen arma inter festinatosque labores
> dulcis adhuc uisu: niueo natat ignis in ore
> purpureus fuluoque nitet coma gratior auro.
> Necdum prima noua lanugine uertitur aetas,
> tranquillaeque faces oculis et plurima uultu
> mater inest, qualis Lycia uenator Apollo
> cum redit et saeuis permutat plectra pharetris.
>
> (*Ach.* 1.158–66)

> Icy pallor rivets the Nereid. The lad was there, much sweat and dust made him bigger, and yet amid weapons and hurried labours he was still sweet to look upon. A bright glow swims in his snow-white face

[27] The same words *proelia ludit* will also be used for the war games of the *puer* Achilles, in *Ach.* 1.40.

[28] The link between the two words is stressed by the hyperbaton and emphasized by *desaeuit*, a verb with strong martial connotations (cf. Verg. *A.* 10.569 *sic toto Aeneas desaeuit in aequore uictor*; Stat. *Theb.* 12.738 *cetera plebeio desaeuit sanguine uirtus*).

[29] Parthenopaeus and Achilles have evident traits in common, starting from the similarity of their life lives: in both cases, in fact, the poet presents the complexity of the relationship between a mother and her adolescent son and the contrast between the mother's fears and the bellicose zeal of the *puer*. As already stated, their ephebic looks are similar, they both still have their mothers' features (*Theb.*4.336–7 *uultusque recedunt / ore mei*; *Ach.* 1.164–5 *plurima uultu / mater inest*).

> and his hair shines fairer than tawny gold. Nor yet is his first youth changing with new down, the lights in his eyes are tranquil and much of his mother is in his face: like Apollo the hunter when he returns from Lycia and quits his fierce quiver for the quill. (tr. Shackleton Bailey 2003)

Achilles' portrait is built upon a fascinating set of contrasts, following the *topoi* of the child-hero and the *puer delicatus* pattern. The *puer*'s heroic appearance is a great motive of worry for his *timida mater*, unable by now to hug her son, who has become too tall and heavy (*Ach.* 1.173 *iam grauis amplexu iamque aequus uertice matri*): in the meantime the helpless child she had entrusted to Chiron has grown up (1.159 *maior*), reaching his mother's height, and covered in sweat and dust looks even more imposing. In a line which recalls epic feats (1.159 *ille aderat multo sudore et puluere maior*), sweat and dust constitute a heroic and ennobling element for young Achilles, not so much an aesthetic decoration increasing the *puer*'s delicate charm as with Parthenopaeus. This line, emphatically closed in a strong hyperbaton by the word *maior*, through chiasmus and alliteration helps to increase the espressive range and the character's stature (*multo sudore et puluere maior*).

But the elements rendering Achilles a seductive ephebe surprise even the reader, who had been expecting a *magnus Achilles*, the young symbol for heroism and virility: this *puer* Achilles, boy-hero, *ambiguus* in looks and disposition,[30] is a mixture of *uis festina* (*Ach.* 1.148) and physical strength, feminine sweetness and charm. His tender face (1.161 *dulcis adhuc uisu*) shines with grace, on his snow-white cheeks 'swims' a purple fire (1.161 *niueo natat ignis in ore*) and the first signs of *lanugo* are about to appear; his look is calm; he closely resembles his mother (1.164–5 *tranquillaeque faces oculis et plurima uultu / mater inest*).

While sweat and dust dignify the splendid Achilles' captivating image with a sort of epic disguise, another *puer*, Valerius Flaccus'

[30] Cf. Mendelsohn 1990, 295–308; La Penna 2000, 156–62.

Hylas,[31] with his sensual sweating body, represents the pinnacle of the extreme aesthetic power of the ephebe's charm:[32]

> … utque artus et concita pectora sudor
> diluerat, gratos auidus procumbit ad amnes:
> stagna uaga sic luce micant ubi Cynthia caelo
> prospicit aut medii transit rota candida Phoebi –
> tale iubar diffundit aquis ...
>
> (V.Fl. 3.556–60)

> And since sweat had bathed his limbs and labouring breast, he greedily sinks beside the pleasant stream: even as the light that shifts and plays upon a lake, when Cynthia looks forth from heaven or the bright wheel of Phoebus in mid course passes by, so doth he shed a gleam upon the waters. (tr. Mozley 1934)

The *puer*, tired and sweaty (V.Fl. 3.552–3 *fessa … / manu*; 556–7 *… artus et concita pectora sudor / diluerat*), after chasing a stag, seeks some relief in the limpid waters of a spring (3.554 *intactas undas*) and is dragged underwater by the avid arms of the nymph (3.562 *auidas … manus*). The ephebe's fascinating charm is described in a scene of strong erotic impact: Hylas' sweaty body dazzles the natural environment, giving to the spring's waters a splendour similar to the sun's fiery radiance. The splendour (3.558 *luce micant*; 560 *iubar*) and the whiteness (3.559 *candida*) of the *puer* help to increase the erotic tension of the nymph's assault.[33] Indeed, Hylas is described as *ferox ardore* (3.549) and *auidus* (3.557), and then directs his lust to a pure fountain (3.554 *intactas undas*),[34] able to satisfy it (3.557 *gratos … ad amnes*); but the nymph, too, lusts after the *puer*'s body (3.562 *auidas*

[31] About Hylas and the connections with Apollonius Rhodius, Theocritus and Propertius, cf. Traglia 1983, 304–25; Palombi 1985, 72–92; Hershkowitz 1998b, 148–59; La Penna 2000, 169–82.

[32] Hylas often appears in the lists of mythical *exempla* given by the Flavian poets for the splendour of an ephebe and his homoerotic relationship; thus, he is mentioned by Statius as a model for the *delicatus* Glaucias (*Silv.* 2.1.113 *Alcides pensaret Hylan…*), and his relationship with Hercules is included by Martial in a catalogue of famous couples *delicatus-dominus* (11.43.5 *Incuruabat Hylan posito Tirynthius arcu*); furthermore Hylas is to be found among the splendid ephebes surpassed by Earinus (*Silv.* 3.4.42–5 *... Te caerula Nais / mallet et adprensa traxisset fortius urna. / Tu, puer, ante omnis ...*), and at least seven times in Martial's epigrams, as an exemplary reference to a *puer's* beauty (5.48.5 *talis raptus Hylas*, 6.68.7–8, 9.25.7, 10.4.3).

[33] Cf. also Malamud and McGuire 1993, 203–12.

[34] The expression *procumbit* (V.Fl.. 3.557), which also occurs in Propertius' elegies (1.20.41 *incumbens*) and is used of Narcissus in Ovid's *Metamorphos*es (3.414 *procubuit*), has a clear erotic value.

… *manus*) and she certainly does not meet with any resistance (3.564 *adiutae … uires*); the erotic tension is expressed by the description the sensual physical materiality of Hylas' sweaty chest and limbs (3.556–7 *utque artus et concita pectora sudor / diluerat*)[35] and by the final intimation of the weight of his body (3.564 *prono nam pondere*).

Thus, sweat and dust often serve to enrich (though with diverse values and aims) the alluring features of the boy-heroes of the Flavian epics.[36] And, like many elements of the canon of ephebic beauty, the detail of the seductive presence of the 'heroic' *puluis* on the *puer*'s tender face can be traced back to Ovid's poetry. The charm of the presence of dust on an ephebic face, in fact, is also mentioned by Phaedra in *Heroides* 4 as a captivating element of Hippolytus' *forma uirilis*:

> Candida uestis erat, praecincti flore capilli,
> flaua uerecundus tinxerat ora rubor,
> quemque uocant aliae uultum rigidumque trucemque,
> pro rigido Phaedra iudice fortis erat.
> Sint procul a nobis iuuenes ut femina compti:
> fine coli modico forma uirilis amat.
> Te tuus iste rigor positique sine arte capilli
> et leuis egregio puluis in ore decet.
>
> (Ov. *Ep.* 4.71–8)

> Shining white was your raiment, bound round with flowers your locks, the blush of modesty had tinged your sun-browned cheeks, and, what others call a countenance hard and stern, in Phaedra's eye was strong instead of hard. Away from me with your young men arrayed like women: beauty in a man would fain be striven for in a measure. That hardness of feature suits you well, those locks that fall without art, and the light dust upon your handsome face. (tr. Showerman-Goold 1977)

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[35] It is possible to mention also the equally charming image of the anointed bodies of some other splendid Statian ephebes, such as Idas and Parthenopaeus, before confronting each other in the race (*Theb.* 6.575–87 *…tunc Palladios non inscius haustus / incubuit pinguique cutem fuscatur oliuo. / Hoc Idas, hoc more Dymas aliique nitescunt. / Sic ubi tranquillo perlucent sidera ponto / uibraturque fretis caeli stellantis imago, / omnia clara nitent, sed clarior omnia supra / Hesperus exercet radios, quantusque per altum / aethera, caeruleis tantus monstratur in undis. / Proximus et forma nec multum segnior Idas / cursibus atque aeuo iuxta prior; attamen illi / iam tenuem pingues florem induxere palaestrae, / deserpitque genis nec se lanugo fatetur / intonsae sub nube comae*). Cf. also *Silv.* 2.6.43–7.

[36] *Puluis* and sweat are also to be found side by side in the image of Statius' literary efforts, coated in dust and sweat, in the "field" of *magnus Achilles* in the prooemium of the *Achilleid* (*Ach.* 1.17–8 *da ueniam ac trepidum patere hoc sudare parumper / puluere…*); cf. Nauta 2006, 32–3.

Hippolytus' *forma uirilis* consists in a moderate display of strength and grace, in a kind of fusion of the ephebic characteristics of splendour and whiteness with the virility of a robust body and a strong and proud face. The fascinating film of dust (4.78 *et leuis egregio puluis in ore decet*) upon a snow-white or tenderly blushing face is one of the many topical images of a boy's portrait in Flavian poetry, as for Parthenopaeus, Achilles or the *delicatus* Philetus of *Silv.* 2.6.

Nevertheless, going back to the former episode concerning Hylas, where the splendid backdrop of shining transparent water sets off the boy's whiteness, water in Flavian epic, as well as sweat and dust, is perfectly suited to represent the ambiguities and the contrasts of the boy-hero. Water revives the *puer* Achilles' tired and sweaty body, whose splendour is compared to Castor's in a topical astral simile:

> Protinus ille subit rapido quae proxima saltu
> flumina fumantesque genas crinemque nouatur
> fontibus, Eurotae qualis uada Castor anhelo
> intrat equo fessumque sui iubar excitat astri
>
> (*Ach.* 1.178–81)

> Forthwith in a swift leap he approaches the nearest stream and freshens his steaming cheeks and hair in its water, like Castor entering the shallows of Eurotas with panting steed and furbishing the weary ray of his star.

A limpid and transparent spring is the fascinating setting for the splendid Hylas' aesthetic show, when he first plunges, and later mortally sinks, in waters that are as refulgent as his body; water seems to be the ideal habitat for the "games" of another fragile and splendid boy-hero, Crenaeus in *Theb.* 9.319–51, whose fate is also premature death:

> Gaudebat Fauno nymphaque Ismenide natus
> maternis bellare tener Crenaeus in undis,
> Crenaeus, cui prima dies in gurgite fido
> et natale uadum et uirides cunabula ripae.
> Ergo ratus nihil Elysias ibi posse Sorores,
> laetus adulantem nunc hoc, nunc margine ab illo
> transit auum, leuat unda gradus, seu defluus ille,
> siue obliquus eat; nec cum subit obuius ullas
> stagna dedere moras pariterque reuertitur amnis.
> Non Anthedonii tegit hospitis inguina pontus
> blandior, aestiuo nec se magis aequore Triton
> exerit, aut carae festinus ad oscula matris

cum remeat tardumque ferit delphina Palaemon.
Arma decent umeros, clipeusque insignis et auro
lucidus Aoniae caelatur origine gentis.
Sidonis hic blandi per candida terga iuuenci,
iam secura maris, teneris iam cornua palmis
non tenet, extremis adludunt aequora plantis;
ire putes clipeo fluctusque secare iuuencum.
Adiuuat unda fidem pelago, nec discolor amnis.
Tunc audax pariter telis et uoce proterua
Hippomedonta petit: "Non haec fecunda ueneno
Lerna, nec Herculeis haustae serpentibus undae:
sacrum amnem, sacrum (et miser experiere!) deumque
altrices inrumpis aquas." Nihil ille, sed ibat
comminus; opposuit cumulo se densior amnis
tardauitque manum; uulnus tamen illa retentum
pertulit atque animae tota in penetralia sedit.
Horruit unda nefas, siluae fleuistis utraeque,
et grauiora cauae sonuerunt murmura ripae.
Vltimus ille sonus moribundo emersit ab ore,
"Mater!", in hanc miseri ciciderunt flumina uocem.

(*Theb.* 9.319–51)

Callow Crenaeus, born of Faunus and the nymph Ismenis, rejoiced to wage war in his mother's waters—Crenaeus, whose first day dawned in that trusted stream, whose native river it was, and whose cradle was its green banks. Thinking therefore that the Elysian sisters had no power there, joyfully now from this bank, now from that, he makes his way across his caressing grandfather: the waves bear up his steps, whether he go downstream or on a slanting path; nor when he goes against the current did the pools make any delay, and the river goes backwards with him. Not more gentle the sea that covers the waist of the Anthedonian guest, nor does Triton rise higher from the sea in the summer, or Palaemon when he returns in haste to his dear mother's kisses and strikes his laggard dolphin. His weapons adorn his shoulders and his shield, glorious and gleaming with gold, is engraved with the origins of the Aonian race. Here is the Sidonian maid upon the winsome bullock's brilliant white back, now fearless of the sea, and now holding no more his horns in her delicate hands, while the sea plays around the extremities of her feet; you would think the bullock moved upon the shield and cut through the waves. The water adds credence, nor is the river a different colour from the graven sea. Then boldly he attacks Hippomedon with spears and insolent words alike: "This is not Lerna teeming with poison, nor are these the waters that were drunk by Hercules' snakes: sacred is the river, yes sacred—and so you shall find it, poor fool!—on which you trespass, and its waters have nursed gods." The other made no reply, but went on to meet him; the river reared up in a denser mass

> to oppose him and slowed his hand; that hand, however, drove home the wound thus hindered, and came to rest in his soul's inner chambers. The waters shuddered at the sinful deed, you woods on either side did weep, and the hollow banks resounded with deeper groans. From his dying lips this last cry came forth, "Mother!": over this utterance of the poor boy's the river-waters closed. (tr. Dewar 1991)

A solemn invocation of the Muses (Theb. 9.315–8) singles out this episode of the *puer* Crenaeus, the son of a faun and a nymph, grandson of the river Ismenus (9.319 *…Fauno nymphaque Ismenide natus*), whose name implies what his fate will be. From the first lines, the military atmosphere appears quite far away. The waters, in which the *puer* plays, certainly do not represent a battlefield, nor any kind of physical "training" to help him reach his epic maturity, as was, for instance, "Chiron's school" for the young Achilles, compelled to severe tests of endurance, in the whirling waters of the river Spercheos (*Ach.* 2.143–51). What transpires is rather Crenaeus' carefree joy, happily enjoying himself while he merrily hops along the shores and plays with the current (9.324–7), playfighting among the river's maternal waves. The soft and protective environment of the river's waters constitutes a regress to the exclusive and joyful world of early childhood (9.321 *prima dies*): indeed, the river cuddles the *puer*, flattering him (9.324 *laetus adulantem*), caressing him, protecting him, and fulfilling his wishes.[37]

Crenaeus seems to move far from the dangers and the tragedies of war, happy in the embrace of his family, safe and relaxed as he was in the cradle or even in his mother's womb (9.321–2 *…cui prima dies in gurgite fido / et natale uadum et uirides cunabula ripae*); the *puer* seems also to be quite convinced that not even the Parcae can affect this privileged familiar condition (9.323 *ergo ratus nihil Elysias ibi posse Sorores*). In his natural habitat, water seems to support the *puer*'s inclination to a selfish satisfaction of his childish needs, as well as supplying him with protection, games and amusement, keeping away the problems and values of the epic *bellum*, caused by carelessness and imprudence, or just because the playful *puer* is still immature

[37] Cf. *Theb.* 9.324–7, where the river's waters affectionately follow the *puer*'s gestures when he crosses or goes with the flow; even if he tries to oppose it, the river itself alters its flow and goes back with him (9.326–7 *…nec cum subit obuius ullas / stagna dedere moras pariterque reuertitur amnis*).

and as yet unprepared for conflict. Immaturity, imprudence, confusing war with play will be fatal to him in the end.

The tone and the language help to create an atmosphere of tender homely lightheartedness quite unusual in the *Thebaid*, a poem constantly pervaded with dramatic tension. In the first place, in initial position in the line[38] we find two key words for the happy enthusiasm of the *puer*'s wargames, *gaudebat* (9.319) and *laetus* (9.324);[39] moreover *tener* (320 *tener Crenaeus*), *blandus* (329 *blandior*) and *cunabula* (322) for the tender world of childhood, *fidus* (321 *in gurgite fido*) and *securus* (323) for the child's trust in his mother's (320 *maternis … in undis*) and grandfather's care (325 *auum*). This same lightheartedness remains in the aquatic comparisons that close the first tender portrait of the *puer*: in fact the river's loving cuddles are compared to the sweetness (328–9 *pontus blandior*) with which seawater 'embraces' the belly of Glaucus, to the joy Triton shows when rising from the waves of the sea in summer, and to Palemon's running to be kissed by his mother (330 *…carae festinus ad oscula matris*).

Lightheartedness, affection, sweetness also characterize the description of the reliefs on Crenaeus' shield (334–7), where Europa furrows the waves of the sea on the white back of the *blandus* bull (334 *Sidonis hic blandi per candida terga iuuenci*), her toe-tips playing with the waves while she is no longer afraid of the sea (335–6 *iam secura maris, teneris iam cornua palmis / non tenet*).

But in the *Thebaid* war is always round the corner; only the child-heroes forget it. The caesura between the first part and the tragedy of the second is anticipated by the presentation of the *puer*'s military outfit, which, even if centred on the traditional rich splendour of the child-hero (332–3 *arma decent umeros, clipeus insignis et auro / lucidus…*), throws the first sad shadow on the carelessness of the water-

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[38] The words the poet places at the beginning of the line seem to sum up the harmony of Crenaeus' family: *gaudebat* (319), *maternis* (320), *Crenaeus* (321), *et natale uadum* (322), *ergo* (323), *laetus* (324), *transit auum* (325).

[39] *Laetus* acquires more strength in the happy assonant combination with the participle *adulantem* (9.324 *laetus adulantem*). Enthusiasm and light-heartedness, often deadly for an imprudent and naive *puer*, characterize the lives of other boy-heroes of Flavian epic, such as Hylas himself, happy (V.Fl. 1.109 *umeris gaudentibus*) to be able to follow and help Hercules, Parthenopaeus (Stat. *Theb.* 9.319, 694–9, 724–5), thrilled by the idea of at last being able to go to war, delighted with the colours and sounds of his armour and of battle, or Cinyps, pleased with his plumed helmet, a gift of his commander (Sil. 12.225–6 *…puer illa gerebat / non paruo laetus ductoris munere Cinyps*).

games. Crenaeus, just as Parthenopaeus, ends up by confusing war with games in a dramatic way and pays with his life for an enthusiastic, but childish and inexpert, bellicose fervour: in fact, he provokes and insults Hippomedon, who quickly kills him (339–46). One line (339 *tunc audax pariter telis et uoce proterua*) defines Crenaeus' puerile arrogance, associating him with Parthenopaeus, who is also a victim of his own naivety and immaturity, and also *audax* (*Theb.* 6.610, 9.729, 781, 810) and *proteruus* (1.44–5 *…plorandaque bella proterui / Arcados*).

Finally, Crenaeus and Parthenopaeus also share the last gesture desperately addressed to their mothers before dying: while Parthenopaeus entrusts his friend Dorceus with a long message of forgiveness for Atalanta (*Theb.* 9.884–907), Crenaeus barely has the time for a last dramatic cry of grief looking for his mother,[40] before being swallowed forever by the river:

> ultimus ille sonus moribundo emersit ab ore,
> "mater!", in hanc miseri ceciderunt flumina uocem
>
> (*Theb.* 9.349–50)

> A last sound came from his dying mouth: "Mother". On this the poor fellow's word the river descended.

The water, once the carefree setting of the puer's games, ends up participating in the horror and drama of a family broken by the cruelty and the delusions of war: the river's waves ripple in horror, the mother looks in despair for the corpse for a last embrace and pathetic words of farewell (*Theb.* 9.351–403).

The ambiguity of the child-heroes is emphasized by the fact that the character of these fascinating and fragile *pueri*, immature teenagers always suspended between the dimensions of war, love and play, can often be traced back to the ephebic imagery of Ovidian poetry.

The model of Hippolytus has already been mentioned. Evidently, the episode of Hylas' abduction[41] comes from Narcissus in the *Metamorphoses*, who experiences his seduction charmed by the beauty of such a dazzling, intact background (*Met.* 3.407–14, 420–4, 474–93). Hylas and Crenaeus should also be compared with Ovid's Hermaph-

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[40] Crenaeus' cry will be echoed by his mother in search of the *puer*'s corpse (*Theb.* 9.355–6 *utque erupit aquis iterumque trementi / ingeminat "Crenaee" sono*).

[41] On the importance of Hylas in the poetry of the Flavian age and the episode of another aquatic abduction in Silius Italicus' *Punica* cf. Vinchesi 2004, 103–11.

roditus (*Met.* 4.278–388), in view of some lexical and thematic choices,[42] but also for the characteristics of a portrait full of fascinating chromatic details of a captivating sensuality:[43]

> Nais ab his tacuit; pueri rubor ora notauit
> (nescit enim, quid amor), sed et erubuisse decebat.
> Hic color aprica pendentibus arbore pomis
> aut ebori tincto est, aut sub candore rubenti,
> cum frustra resonant aera auxiliaria, lunae
>
> (*Met.* 4.329–33)

> With this, the Naiad fell silent and a blush appeared on the boy's cheek (for he did not know what love was), but even to blush became him. He was the colour of apples hanging from a sun-drenched tree, or of stained ivory or of the moon grown red in the midst of her brightness while the relieving bronze sounds out in vain. (tr. Hill 1985)

In the Ovidian episode, water is the ideal backdrop for the *puer*'s *lusus* and carefree happiness, as well as for his striking *nuda forma*; the aquatic *lusus,* in a certain way, are also fatal for the Ovidian *puer*. His splendour, his androgynous ambiguity and ephebic whiteness are stressed in a play of mirrors and transparencies,[44] by the limpid[45] brilliance and the seductive caresses of the water on the soft and tender body of Hermaphroditus, who plays with the tepid water of the fountain:

> huc it et hinc illuc et in adludentibus undis
> summa pedum taloque tenus uestigia tinguit;
> nec mora, temperie blandarum captus aquarum
> mollia de tenero uelamina corpore ponit.
> Tum uero placuit nudaeque cupidine formae
> Salmacis exarsit. Flagrant quoque lumina nymphae,
> non aliter, quam cum puro nitidissimus orbe
> opposita speculi referitur imagine Phoebus
>
> (Ov. *Met.* 4.342–9)

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[42] The androgynous ambiguity of the adolescent's face (*Met.* 4.290–1 *cuius erat facies, in qua materque paterque / cognosci possent*), still showing a clear resemblance to the mother's features, is, for instance, a theme used by Statius for his ephebes, such as Achilles (*Ach.* 1.164–5), Parthenopaeus (*Theb.* 4.336–7, 9.582) and Crenaeus (*Theb.* 9.381).

[43] Cf. Fränkel 1945, 216–7: "This is the only passage in Ovid's works, I believe, which has a touch of sultry sensuality."

[44] La Penna 1983, 235–43, speaks of "softening" and "dematerialization".

[45] Ovid insists on the purity, the clarity and sheen of water (*Met.* 4.297–8 *lucentis … / lymphae*; 300 *perspicuus liquor*), that shines like the nymph's garments (*lucenti … amictu*) or the body of the ephebe (4.354 *in liquidis translucet aquis*).

> but he … went here and there and everywhere dipping just the tips of his feet, then up to his ankles, into the playful waters; and there was no delay before he was captivated by the sweet and temperate waters and took the soft clothing from his delicate body. Then indeed he gave pleasure and Salmacis burned with desire for his naked beauty; and the nymph's eyes were aflame too, just as when Phoebus' orb, clear and at its brightest, is reflected in the image of a mirror facing it. (tr. Hill 1985)

> Ille cauis uelox applauso corpore palmis
> desilit in latices alternaque bracchia ducens
> in liquidis translucet aquis, ut eburnea siquis
> signa tegat claro uel candida lilia uitro.
>
> (Ov. *Met.* 4.352–5)

> He swiftly jumped down into the waters slapping his body with hollowed palms and, plying his arms in turn, he gleamed through the transparant waters just like an ivory statue or white lilies if someone encases them in clear glass. (tr. Hill 1985)

The Ovidian ephebe is characterized by the same lightheartedness and the same wish to enjoy himself we have found in the *puer* Crenaeus. While the verb *gaudeo* (*Met* 4.294–5 *ignotis errare locis, ignota uidere / flumina gaudebat …*) appears to be typical of such a context, being applied to Crenaeus (*Theb.* 9.319 *gaudebat*) as well as to Hylas (*Arg.* 1.109 *umeris gaudentibus*), Parthenopaeus (*Theb.* 9.724 *gaudes*) and Podetus (Sil. 14.497), other textual details confirm the impression that Statius in the episode of Crenaeus refers to Ovid, as shown also by the similarity in the use of a tone of innocent and charming levity and in the aquatic *ludus* of the two boys. For instance, Hermaphroditus is described as having a good time playing with the transparent waves (*Met.* 4.342 *in adludentibus undis*) of the spring. Some lexical choices seem to suggest the Ovidian passage: the connection *in adludentibus undis* is repeated in *Theb.* 9.320 (*maternis … in undis*), 321 (*in gurgite fido*) and most of all in 336 (*adludunt aequora*); the carefree wandering of Hermaphrodite in the fountain (*Met.* 4.342 *huc it et hinc illuc*) recurs with similar words also for Crenaeus, jumping happily from one shore to the other (*Theb.* 9.324 *laetus adulantem nunc hoc, nunc margine ab illo*); moreover, the waters where both boys play are equally charming and caressing (*Met.* 4.344 *blandarum … aquarum*; *Theb.* 9.328–9 *pontus / blandior*). The Ovidian ephebe is revived in the boy-hero Crenaeus, and he is certainly unfit for the *Thebaid* 's war scene, from where he quickly disappears.

STATIUS *THEBAID* 1.72: IS JOCASTA DEAD OR ALIVE? THE TRADITION OF JOCASTA'S SUICIDE IN GREEK AND ROMAN DRAMA AND IN STATIUS' *THEBAID*[*]

Johannes J.L. Smolenaars

The story of Statius' *Thebaid* starts some time after the close of Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus* (further: *OT*) and shortly before his *Oedipus Coloneus* (*OC*). At the end of *OT* Jocasta has hanged herself, Oedipus has blinded himself and asks Creon to send him away from Thebes. At the beginning of *OC* there has been an interval of many years. It appears that Oedipus remained at Thebes for some time and was expelled just when he had learned to resign himself to his fate; he regrets that his sons did nothing to prevent his expulsion. Blind Oedipus has grown old and guided by Antigone has entered a grove sacred to the Eumenides at Colonos, where he utters a solemn prayer to the goddesses (*OC* 84–110). Then Ismene arrives from Thebes and tells her father about the strife between her brothers: Polynices has gone to Argos and is preparing for war. Hereafter the drama unfolds.

At the beginning of *Thebaid* I, immediately after the eulogy on Domitian in the proem, we listen to Oedipus cursing his sons and praying to the gods of Tartarus, especially Tisiphone, to punish them (*Theb.* 1.56–87). This prayer, the structural counterpart to that in *OC* but different in tone and content, is preceded by a brief description of the present situation: Oedipus has blinded himself (46–7) and is hiding in a secret abode (49f.). Answering Oedipus' prayer, Tisiphone leaves Tartarus for Thebes and causes madness to enter the brothers' hearts (123–30). Until this moment, it appears, the brothers have been sharing the rule over Thebes (130 *sociis … regnis*), but at this point Tisiphone makes *discordia* enter their minds. As a result of this *discordia,* the brothers decide to rule over Thebes each for one year in turn, and alternately go into exile (138–41). In line 164, Eteocles is appointed by lot to be king for the first time, and Polynices leaves

[*] For their valuable comments on this paper I am grateful to Jan Maarten Bremer, Pieter van den Broek, Marietje van Erp Taalman Kip, Irene de Jong, Jørn Soerink and Fanny Struyk.

Thebes. Subsequently, Jupiter in a council of the gods (197ff.) announces his decision to destroy both Argos and Thebes, in order to answer Oedipus' prayers, thus continuing the chain of events Tisiphone had already set in motion.[1] He will punish Oedipus' sons for their outrageous behaviour: ***at nati (facinus sine more!) cadentes/ calcauere oculos*** (1.238f.), "but his sons (outrageous deed!) trampled his eyes as they fell".[2] In lines 292ff., Jupiter sends Mercurius to Laius in the underworld, whose soul we are told is still waiting at this side of the Lethe and who therefore—I assume—still lies unburied somewhere at the place of his death, at the crossroads in Phocis. Laius has to ascend to the upper world, go to Thebes and persuade Eteocles to break the contract for the alternate reign. In the meantime (312ff.), Polynices—and the poem—is on his way to Argos.

After this summary of the dramatic situation and the sequence of events in ***Theb.*** 1.46–312, I return to Oedipus' prayer in lines 59–87.

Oedipus' prayer and his curse

Oedipus asks Tisiphone to take revenge on his sons, a request he himself labelled as ***peruersa uota*** (59).[3] In order to justify this appeal and persuade the dreadful goddess to grant his prayer, in which he asks for the destruction and death of both his sons, Oedipus sums up the tragic events of his life, which he presents as if guided by Tisiphone and achieved by him in her honour:

> adnue, Tisiphone, peruersaque uota secunda:
> si bene quid merui, si me de matre cadentem
> fouisti[4] gremio et traiectum uulnere plantas[5]

[1] See on this speech the contribution of Hill to this volume.

[2] Tr. Shackleton Bailey (further: SB). For the interpretation of *calcauere oculos* as either physical (SB) or metaphorical, see below.

[3] For a survey of the various explanations of this curse in the Greek tradition, see Ganiban 2007, 26–7, note 10, who also points out that the version of the curse in Sophocles *OC* is "the only Greek version in which the curse does not give birth to the expedition." In Statius, as elsewhere, the curse sets in motion the events of the *Thebaid*.

[4] The rather rude phrase *me de matre cadentem/ fouisti gremio* is taken from or imitated by (see Smolenaars 1994, xxxv–xlii) V.Fl. 1.355 *quem matre cadentem/ Piresius gemino fouit pater amne*. In both cases, *gremio* and more unusual *gemino amne* refer to the ritualistic recognition of a child by a father, who in Statius here is substituted with Tisiphone. See also van Dam 1984, 129 on *Silv.* 2.1.120–4 and 471 on 2.7. 36–41.

firmasti, si stagna peti Cirrhaea bicorni
interfusa iugo, possem cum degere falso
contentus Polybo, trifidaeque in Phocidos arto
longaeuum implicui regem[6] secuique trementis
ora senis, dum quaero patrem, si Sphingos iniquae
callidus ambages te praemonstrante resolui,
si dulces furias et lamentabile matris
conubium gauisus ini noctemque nefandam
saepe tuli natosque tibi, scis ipsa, paraui,
mox auidus poenae digitis cedentibus ultro
incubui miseraque oculos in matre reliqui:
exaudi, si digna precor quaeque ipsa furenti
subiceres.

(*Theb*. 1.59–74)

Tisiphone, give me your nod and favour my warped desire. If I have done aught of service, if you cherished me in your lap when I dropped from my mother and strengthened me when they pierced my feet; if I sought Cirrha's pool poured out between two mountain peaks and in quest of father (though I might have lived content with the impostor Polybus) entwined the aged king in that narrow place of triply sundered Phocis and cut off the trembling old man's head; if under your tutelage I had cunning to solve the riddle of the cruel Sphinx; if I joyfully entered sweet madness and my mother's lamentable wedlock, enduring many a night of evil and making children for *you*, as well you know; if thereafter, avid for punishment, I pressed down upon yielding fingers and left my eyes upon my hapless mother: hear oh hear, if my prayer be worthy and such as you yourself might whisper to my frenzy. (tr. SB).

In line 73 Oedipus summarizes the preceding justification of his appeal with *si digna precor*, and then, finally, phrases his violent anger against his sons and requests Tisiphone to punish them. He curses his sons because they did not guide him in his blindness nor console him in his grief:

orbum uisu regnisque carentem
non regere aut dictis maerentem flectere adorti,
quos genui quocumque toro; quin ecce superbi

[5] A clever pun on the traditional etymology of Oedipus' name, reworking Virgil's famous line on Hector: *perque pedes traiectus lora tumentis* (*A.* 2.273).

[6] Recalling Priam's violent death in *A.* 2.525 *longaeuum* and 552 *implicuitque comam laeua*. To my mind all translators, also SB above, and commentators are wrong about *implicui*. It is typical of Statius' style to leave the correct interpretation of *implicui* as 'scil. *comam regis laeua*' to the reader's recognition of the source of this reference.

—pro dolor!—et nostro iamdudum funere reges
insultant tenebris gemitusque odere paternos.

(*Theb*. 1.74–8)

Those I begot (no matter in what bed) did not try to guide me, bereft of sight and sceptre, or sway my grieving with words. Nay behold (ah agony!), in their pride, kings this while by my calamity, they even mock my darkness, impatient of their father's groans. (tr. SB)

Barth is certainly right in taking *insultant tenebris* (78) as a metaphor: "mock my darkness"; "darkness" is part of the intricate play of words in this episode, and throughout book 1, of light and dark, life and death, Oedipus' blindness and the "fierce daylight of his soul" (*saeua dies animi*, 52). One would perhaps prefer a similar metaphorical interpretation of *calcauere oculos* in Jupiter's complaint (1.238f. above), echoing Oedipus' complaint here: *at nati (facinus sine more!) cadentes/ calcauere oculos* (238 f.). This phrase may be interpreted as a physical act, "trampled his eyes as they fell" (SB), or metaphorically, "mock my blindness" (Mozley 1928).[7] The difficult choice between these interpretations of lines 78 and 238f. is even further complicated by the ambiguous phrase *oculos in matre reliqui* (1.72). This phrase is, in fact, the focus of my contribution.

From Oedipus' sad account in lines 60–72 introducing his curse we have learned the bare facts of his life:
– his feet were pierced directly after his birth (61f.);
– he killed his real father, unwittingly (62–6);
– he solved the riddle of the Sphinx (66–7);
– he married his mother and fathered [four] children on her (68–70);
– after he discovered the truth about his birth and marriage, he blinded himself (71–2).

In this account, Statius' Oedipus closely follows the outlines of Sophocles' version in *OT*. In the course of Sophocles' play, the truth about Laius' death is brought to light: the king has unwittingly been killed by his son Oedipus, with his staff, on the three-forked road in Phocis (811); after the truth has been discovered about the death of

[7] The verb is used in its literal sense in a similarly violent context by Jocasta: *haec sunt calcanda, nefande,/ ubera, perque uterum sonipes hic matris agendus* (*Theb*. 11.341). In Sen. *Con*. 2.4.3 (*cadentes iam oculos ... erexit*) and *Silv*. 3.5.39 *cadentes oculos* is used of eyes in the process of dying. In any case, I find it difficult to accept Vessey's explanation that Oedipus' reasons for the curse "need be no more than bitter phantasies": Vessey 1973, 74; cf. Ganiban 2007, 27.

her former husband and the identity of Oedipus, her son and present husband, Jocasta commits suicide by hanging herself; when he finds her dead, Oedipus blinds himself. But if we would maintain that *OT* is Statius' main model in every detail mentioned here, we are forced to interpret *in matre* in line 1.72 as 'her corpse'. Oedipus in this line reminds the Fury of the moment he blinded himself:

> miseraque oculos in matre reliqui
>
> left my eyes upon my hapless mother (tr. SB)

In his footnote Shackleton Bailey indeed explains *in matre* as 'her corpse' and adds: "As in Sophocles, Jocasta's suicide here precedes the blinding, whereas in 11.637ff. it is the other way round". His "in 11.637ff. it is the other way round" can only mean that Jocasta's suicide in book 11 does not precede (as it would be the case in 1.72), but follow the blinding. This obvious fact, however, would need no explanation at all and, therefore, I assume that Shackleton Bailey's observation is a restrained comment on the fact that Jocasta in the *Thebaid* seems to kill herself twice, in books 1 and 11, that is if his explanation of *in matre* in 1.72 is correct.

If we follow this interpretation and accept that Jocasta is already dead right at the beginning of the *Thebaid*, we must also be prepared to go along with the implication of Shackleton Bailey's statement and consider Statius to be a careless or forgetful poet, who in book 11 seems to have forgotten what he wrote in book 1.[8] Such carelessness could be forgiven in the case of an ordinary soldier killed in one book and still alive in the next, a not uncommon phenomenon in epic poetry, but it is quite a different matter when it concerns one of the central figures in Statius' books 7 and 11. In my opinion, this is a very unattractive point of departure in the interpretation of this otherwise meticulous and never dozing poet. We should try to find a more convincing explanation, as I will suggest in the following.

[8] Lesueur 1990, 119 thinks that Statius perhaps was not aware of the contradiction or deliberately chose a vague ("voilé") phrase to evoke this monstruous bond. SB in his Loeb-edition points at other 'inconsistencies', such as at *Theb.* 7.608, where see my note (1994 *ad loc.*).

Tradition of the myth

To most modern readers, the tragic story of Oedipus' life is probably best known from Sophocles' *OT*, but the Greeks and Romans who attended the dramatic performances of for example Euripides' *Oidipous* and *Phoinissai* (further: *Phoin.*) and Seneca's *Oedipus* and *Phoenissae* (*Phoen.*) had a much wider range of expectations, because they were familiar not only with the plays we know, but also with plays that survive, at best, in fragmentary form. The main variants in the tradition which are relevant to my argument concern the (self)blinding of Oedipus and the when, where and how of Jocasta's self-inflicted death.

The story in *OT*, followed at least in part by Statius, is the result of Sophocles' careful selection from earlier versions and his addition of new elements, such as the occurrence of the plague at Thebes, which in his version provokes the discovery of the truth about Oedipus. Before Sophocles, parts of this famous story had already been told by Homer:

– in *Iliad* 4.370–400 (cf. also 5.800–13) the story is told that before the actual war between Eteocles and Polynices, Tydeus went on an embassy to Thebes, was ambushed by fifty Thebans, and killed all but one, sparing Maion's life only in order to have him tell the sad news at Thebes;[9]

– in *Iliad* 23.678f. Mecisteus is said to have defeated all the Cadmeans at the funeral games of Oedipus at Thebes;[10]

– in *Odyssey* 11.271–80 Oedipus has killed his father and married his mother Epikaste. She committed suicide by hanging herself, as in *OT*, after she had discovered the truth about her marriage, but differently from *OT* Oedipus lived on as king until his death (for the text see below, 224). Part of *OT*'s plot is already present in this part of Homer's *Nekyia*, but conspicuously absent are: the Sphinx, the plague, the self-blinding of Oedipus, and the children.

Between Homer and Sophocles' *OT* (probably produced ca. 430), the story was elaborated on in poetry and prose.[11] Our knowledge of

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[9] For Statius' brilliant elaboration of the story, see my analysis (2004).

[10] Μηκιστῆος υἱὸς Ταλαϊονίδαο ἄνακτος,/ ὅς ποτε Θήβαςδ' ἦλθε δεδουπότος Οἰδιπόδαο/ ἐς τάφον· ἔνθα δὲ πάντας ἐνίκα Καδμείωνας. For the meaning of δεδουπότος, either in war (Aristarchus) or of a peaceful death, see Richardson *ad loc.*

this development is, however, limited. Hesiod knows the Sphinx and the plague (*Th.* 326). Pausanias (9.5.11) reports that in the (lost) epic *Oedipodeia* the mother of Oedipus' four children was not Jocasta but his second wife Eurygeneia; consequently, the incestuous marriage did not produce offspring. According to Proclus, "the story of Oedipus" was told by Nestor in the lost epic called *Kupria* (Homer OCT, vol. 5, p. 103). In the twenty lines remaining from the epic entitled *Cyclic Thebaid* (Homer OCT, vol. 5, p. 113) to be distinguished from the *Thebaid* by Antimachus of Colophon, a curse is pronounced by Oedipus on his sons. Pindar mentions the riddle of the Sphinx (*frg. inc.* 177d), the murder of Laius and the duel between the brothers (*O.* 2.42ff.). The historian Pherecydes of Athens (ca. 450 BC) reports (*FGrH* 3 F 95) that Jocasta gave birth to two sons, Phrastor and Laonutos, but these were killed; later, his second wife Euryganeia bore him Eteocles and Polynices, Antigone and Ismene (cf. Pausanias above). In this report, for the first time two sons are born from Jocasta's incestuous marriage, but Oedipus—just as in Homer—continues to rule Thebes after the anagnorisis.

These and other versions "differing in detail, and allowing scope for selection" (Jebb 1914, xv) existed in the first part of the fifth century and provided Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides with the material they handled freely to create their own versions. Their versions, in spite of differences, have a very important element in common: Jocasta is the mother of Oedipus' four children, which is a very effective combination of the motifs of incest and motherhood in the earlier versions.

Since little is known of the two first parts of Aeschylus' trilogy, *Laios* and *Oidipous*, it is impossible to draw conclusions about their influence on later tradition. Of Euripides' *Oidipous* only a few lines survive (*frg.* 539–557 Kannicht + *Pap.Ox.* 27, 1962, nr. 2455 *frg* .4 and nr. 2459), but surely *frg.* 541 (= schol. Eur. *Phoin.* 61) suggests a remarkable difference from Sophocles' *OT*: Oedipus' blinding here is not self-inflicted, but executed by his servants, and probably before the anagnorisis.[12] This change from earlier tradition would be as astonishing as the scene of soldiers blinding Oedipus as depicted on the

[11] Jebb 1914, xxii–xviii is very helpful here. For a full survey see also Robert 1915, Töchterle 1994, Hutchinson 2001, 120ff. Edmunds 2006, 3ff. considers it impossible to determine the authentic, original version.

[12] See Töchterle 1994, 12.

famous vase from Volterra (*LIMC* V2, 1990, 458, nr 26). Unfortunately, no texts dealing with Jocasta's fate in this play are left, and since in Seneca's play Oedipus' blinding is performed by himself, not by others as in Euripides', we should not necessarily infer from Jocasta's suicide in Seneca's play that she also killed herself in Euripides'.[13]

Whereas these plays and other writings deal with the discovery of the truth about Laius' death, and Oedipus' (self-)blinding and Jocasta's death as its immediate consequences, other poets (and sometimes the same ones) developed a very different storyline concentrating on Jocasta's attempt at reconciliation before the war between her sons began.[14]

The story of the 'Seven against Thebes' is well known since Homer, but Jocasta's attempt, absent in Aeschylus' *Septem*, first occurs—as far as we can tell—in the Lille Papyrus discovered in 1976 (*P.Lille* 76; *fr.* 222b *PMGF*). This lyric version of the Oedipus legend is ascribed by most scholars to Stesichorus (640–555). The fragment contains a dialogue between the seer Teiresias, who foretells the fratricide, and Jocasta, who wants to prevent it. In any case, this storyline presupposes that Jocasta, unlike in Homer and *OT*, lives on after the anagnorisis and after Oedipus' self-blinding. This drastic change in the treatment of the Theban legend is first staged by Euripides in his *Phoinissai*, and later also by Seneca in his *Phoenissae*.[15] In Euripides' *Phoinissai*[16] Jocasta lives on after Oedipus has blinded himself. When her sons, Eteocles and Polynices, start to quarrel about the throne of

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[13] Robert 1915 in ch. VII points at other striking variations in the paradoxographers, such as Oedipus' blinding already in his youth by Polybos and Jocasta killed by her son; see Töchterle 1994, 10, n. 2.

[14] For a full discussion of this scene in Statius see also my commentary (1994) on *Thebaid* 7.470–563 and Appendix VIb.

[15] For a full discussion of Stesichorus' lines, see Hirschberg 1989, 9–17; Bremer 1987; Hutchinson 2001. For Statius' imitation of Euripides, see Reussner 1921; Hirschberg 1989, 9–17 and my (1994) Appendix VIb. The reconciliation-scene is pictured on a Roman sarcophagus dating from the end of the second century AD; see *LIMC* s.v. Iokaste p. 684. *LIMC* assumes from the presence of Oedipus, Antigone and a soldier accompanying Eteocles that here not the duel but an earlier meeting, perhaps in Thebes, is pictured. This is correct; the scene pictured on the sarcophagus is similar to Eur. *Phoin.* 452–587 and Statius *Theb.* 7.452–587. Statius has doubled the scene; Jocasta makes a second attempt in *Theb.* 11.315ff.

[16] For a discussion on the date of this play see Mastronarde 1994, 11–4, who considers one of the years 411–409 the most likely.

Thebes, which is also the subject of Aeschylus' *Septem* (staged in 467), she tries to reconcile her sons, in vain, and then kills herself on the battlefield with a sword taken from one of her two sons after they have killed each other. If we assume that Jocasta in Euripides' *Oidipous* killed herself (but see above), Euripides would offer an interesting case of the same tragic poet producing two very different and mutually exclusive traditions about Jocasta. In this case, however, the poet would deal with these different traditions in two separate plays, whereas Statius is supposed to have Jocasta dead in book 1 (line 72) and allow her to be alive in books 7 and 11 of the same epic.

Reconciliation-scene: setting and timing

We have established that two very different versions were developed of Jocasta's suicide. In one the suicide takes place immediately after the anagnorisis, as in *OT* (as well as Sen. *Oed.*, which will be discussed below); in another it takes place at a much later moment, around the outbreak of war between her sons (*Phoin.*; also Sen. *Phoen.* and Stat. *Theb.* 11, as will be seen below). Now we are in a position to take a closer look at the differing dramatic setting and timing of the reconciliation-scene in Euripides, Seneca and Statius, and to make precise observations about the self-conscious emulative efforts of the two Roman poets. Both Seneca and Statius take the same point of departure as Euripides in *Phoin.*: Jocasta is alive and wants to prevent war. But by many slight changes in the setting and timing, each poet brings about a different dramatic situation and achieves his own dramatic impact. I am convinced that Seneca had Euripides in mind, and Statius both Seneca and Euripides.[17]

In Euripides *Phoin.* 452–587 the brothers meet with Jocasta on her initiative within the walls of Thebes; the battle has not yet begun and there is still time for discussion and reconciliation. But Eteocles rejects his mother's suggestions (587–93) and drives Polynices from the city (587–637). After Jocasta's unsuccesful attempt at reconciliation, bloodshed is inevitable.

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[17] *Contra* Frank 1995, 16–29. Euripides' play was widely popular, also in Roman times. Petronius *Sat.* 80.3–4 offers a fine example: Giton casts himself between Encolpius and Ascyltos, an obvious parody of Jocasta's attempt, and perhaps of Sen. *Phoen.* 443–8. See also the testimonia in Mastronarde-Bremer 1982, *ad* 445–587.

In Seneca *Phoen.* 387–402 a servant informs Jocasta that the two armies are on the verge of battle; Jocasta must reconcile her sons. The situation resembles that in Eur. *Phoin.* in so far as Jocasta is there, alive and eager to make an attempt at reconciliation, but it is far more urgent than in *Phoin.* As the armies close in, Jocasta leaves for the battlefield (420–6). Her offstage actions are subsequently described by the servant in a brilliant eyewitness account (427–42), after which the setting thus described becomes the actual setting of Jocasta's attempt in 443–664. Eteocles' reaction to his mother's plea (664) makes it quite clear that her attempt will fail. It is evident that Seneca has chosen to heighten the dramatic suspense by placing the reconciliation-scene at a later and far more dramatic point than his predecessor, namely at the outbreak of war, by replacing the safe walls of Thebes with the battlefield and, finally, by making Jocasta utter her plea while she is holding both sons and their threatening armies at bay.

In Statius the situation is very different. At the first light of dawn, Jocasta, accompanied by Antigone and Ismene, leaves Thebes in haste and meets her son Polynices in the camp of the Seven (7.470–83). Her highly emotional speech is not a plea for reconciliation as such; she limits herself to suggesting a truce during which Polynices can discuss the matter with his brother. It appears that Statius has transposed the famous attempts in his predecessors to a moment preceding that of the dramatic action in Euripides. The actual meeting in *Phoin.* 452ff. is the outcome of her suggestion to Polynices of a truce (81ff.), whereas in Statius she passionately argues in favour of this truce, during which her attempt at reconciliation might take place. Seneca did not separate this suggestion from the actual meeting at the battlefield for the sake of dramatic tension. Statius chose a dramatic moment and setting not dealt with by his predecessors. In his version, the discussion between the two brothers envisaged by Jocasta never takes place. When Polynices decides to grant his mother's request, the actual success of Jocasta's attempt is thwarted by Tydeus' sarcastic intervention and the killing of Bacchus' tigresses maddened by Tisiphone. Jocasta and her daughters narrowly escape assault; Tydeus' second speech then unleashes the war (7.611 ff.). Statius' transposition of the traditional reconciliation-scene to a much earlier moment in the narrative in book 7, addressing one son only, allows for a second attempt by Jocasta in *Theb.* 11.315–53, now to dissuade Eteocles from battle at the very moment he is donning his suit of armour.

It appears that the differences in setting and timing between these three versions of the same reconciliation-tradition are deliberate and well-calculated in order to achieve very different dramatic effects. At the same time these variations offer different dramatic opportunities. For instance, in Statius, Jocasta's relatively early death at the outbreak of war and before the death of her sons (11.634ff.), creates the opportunity for Oedipus to enter the battlefield and look for his sons (11.580–633). This is a highly original scene. If Jocasta had lived until after the death of her sons, as in *Phoin.* 1454–9, this Oedipus-scene would have been a mere duplication. In Statius, Oedipus is led by Antigone, as in Sophocles' *OC*, and his desire to die is very similar to that in Seneca's *Phoen.*, but now the situation is very different. When Oedipus in *Theb.* 11.627ff. is searching for the sword of one of his sons to kill himself—in vain since the swords have been removed by Antigone—we are reminded not only of Jocasta actually killing herself with one of these swords in *Phoin.* 1454–9, but also of Oedipus' desperate wish to die—in a very different setting—in Sen. *Phoen.* 89–110, which passage in turn reworks parts from Sophocles' *OC*.

Jocasta's suicide: timing and circumstances

Now that we have established and analyzed the two different storylines about Jocasta's death, a close investigation of the timing, circumstances and means of her self-inflicted death in these two strands of the *Oedipodeia*-tradition may help us to improve our understanding of the intertextual references in *Theb.* 1.72 and to answer the question whether Jocasta is dead or alive at the beginning of this epic. In the chronological survey below, I will distinguish between version (A) and (B), according to whether her suicide is put directly after the anagnorisis (A), or—much later—at or after the outbreak of war (B). In version (A) Jocasta traditionally hangs herself, with the exception of Seneca's *Oedipus*. In version (B) she uses a sword to kill herself; the various identifications of the original owner of this sword allow for the introduction of the theme of 'identical weapons'.

In Homer (version A), Epikaste hangs herself, when she has discovered the truth about her marriage:

μητέρα τ' Οἰδιπόδαο ἴδον, καλὴν Ἐπικάστην,
ἣ μέγα ἔργον ἔρεξεν ἀϊδρείῃσι νόοιο
γημαμένη ᾧ υἷϊ· ὁ δ' ὃν πατέρ' ἐξεναρίξας
γῆμεν· ἄφαρ δ' ἀνάπυστα θεοὶ θέσαν ἀνθρώποισιν.
ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν ἐν Θήβῃ πολυηράτῳ ἄλγεα πάσχων
Καδμείων ἤνασσε θεῶν ὀλοὰς διὰ βουλάς·
ἡ δ' ἔβη εἰς Ἀΐδαο πυλάρταο κρατεροῖο,
ἁψαμένη βρόχον αἰπὺν ἀφ' ὑψηλοῖο μελάθρου
ᾧ ἄχεϊ σχομένη· τῷ δ' ἄλγεα κάλλιπ' ὀπίσσω
πολλὰ μάλ', ὅσσα τε μητρὸς ἐρινύες ἐκτελέουσι.

(*Od.* 11.271–80)

And I saw the mother of Oedipus, beautiful Epicaste, who did a monstrous thing in the ignorance of her mind, wedding her own son; and he, when he had slain his own father, wedded her; and soon the gods made these things known among men. Nevertheless, in lovely Thebes, suffering woes, he ruled over the Cadmeans by the dire designs of the gods; but she went down to the house of Hades, the strong warder, making fast a deadly noose from the high ceiling, caught by her own grief; but for him she left behind countless woes, all that a mother's Furies bring to pass. (tr. Murray-Dimock 1995)

In Soph. *OT* (version A) the messenger reports that when Oedipus saw that his mother had hanged herself in the bedroom, he untied the knot, laid her on the ground and pierced his eyes "with the golden pins" (1268f. χρυσηλάτους περόνας) from her garment:

οὗ δὴ κρεμαστὴν τὴν γυναῖκ' ἐσείδομεν,
πλεκταῖς ἑώραις ἐμπεπλεγμένην· ὁ δὲ
ὅπως ὁρᾷ νιν, δεινὰ βρυχηθεὶς τάλας,
χαλᾷ κρεμαστὴν ἀρτάνην· ἐπεὶ δὲ γῇ
ἔκειτο τλήμων, δεινὰ δ' ἦν τἀνθένδ' ὁρᾶν.
Ἀποσπάσας γὰρ εἱμάτων χρυσηλάτους
περόνας ἀπ' αὐτῆς, αἷσιν ἐξεστέλλετο,
ἄρας ἔπαισεν ἄρθρα τῶν αὑτοῦ κύκλων

(*OT* 1263–70)

There we saw the woman hanging, her neck tied in a twisted noose. And when he saw her, with a fearful roar, poor man, he untied the knot from which she hung; and when the unhappy woman lay upon the ground, what we saw next was terrible. For he broke off the golden pins from her raiment, with which she was adorned, and lifting up his eyes struck them (tr. Lloyd-Jones 1994)

In Euripides *Phoin.* (version B) the messenger reports that Jocasta has committed suicide on the battlefield, after her sons had killed each

other. Her weapon was a sword taken from her sons, the target her throat:

> ἄμφω δ' ἅμ' ἐξέπνευσαν ἄθλιον βίον.
> μήτηρ δ', ὅπως ἐσεῖδε τήνδε συμφοράν,
> ὑπερπαθήσασ', ἥρπασ' ἐκ νεκρῶν ξίφος
> κἄπραξε δεινά· διὰ μέσου γὰρ αὐχένος
> ὠθεῖ σίδηρον, ἐν δὲ τοῖσι φιλτάτοις
> θανοῦσα κεῖται περιβαλοῦσ' ἀμφοῖν χέρας.
>
> (*Phoin.* 1454–9)

> Both thus together breathed out the last of their unblessed lives. And seeing this the mother, in a fit of passion, snatched up a sword from the corpses and did a dreadful deed. She thrust the iron blade through the middle of her throat and now lies dead among her beloved sons, embracing them both in their arms. (tr. Kovacs 2002)

Earlier in this play, Jocasta stated that Oedipus, when he discovered the truth about his marriage, blinded himself with "golden pins":

> μαθὼν δὲ τἀμὰ λέκτρα μητρῴων γάμων
> ὁ πάντ' ἀνατλὰς Οἰδίπους παθήματα
> ἐς ὄμμαθ' αὑτοῦ δεινὸν ἐμβάλλει φόνον,
> χρυσηλάτοις πόρπαισιν αἱμάξας κόρας.
>
> (*Phoin.* 59–62)

> Now when Oedipus, who endured all manner of sufferings, learned that in marrying me he had married his mother, he committed dreadful slaughter upon his own eyes, bloodying them with brooches of beaten gold. (tr. Kovacs 2002)

These "brooches of beaten gold" (χρυσηλάτοις πόρπαισιν) with which Oedipus blinded himself recall the χρυσηλάτους περόνας used by him for the same purpose in Soph. *OT* 1268f. In *Phoin.* 62, however, we are not told where Oedipus obtained these pins, and according to Mastronarde (1994) at line 62, this fact would scarcely present any problem to a theatre-audience or average reader: "But the scholarly reader is tempted to press too hard upon details which are ἔξω τοῦ δράματος". Perhaps true, but in this case the use of the same rare epithet in a very similar situation should not, I think, be taken as incidental. Euripides' reference to Sophocles may escape a theatre-audience, the more so after a lapse of probably some twenty years between the performances, but not the reader of these plays. Mastronarde considers χρυσηλάτος a standard epithet for royal possesions. Actually, the epithet occurs twice in Sophocles, the other occurrence being also of a

brooch (*Trach*. 924 πέπλον ᾧ χρυσήλατος προὔκειτο μαστῶν περονίς) and eight times in Euripides, only in our passage of a brooch. Mastronarde argues that similar expressions may genuinely occur without specific imitation or allusion because of the 'formulaic' language and style of tragedy, but in this case I think the use of the rare phrase "brooches of beaten gold" (only here in Euripides and twice in Sophocles) in exactly the same highly dramatic context, viz. Oedipus blinding himself, cannot be mere coincidence; it is rather a deliberate attempt by Euripides to link Jocasta's account with the messenger's in *OT*, whether or not this is recognised by an average reader. If acknowledged, the reference answers our question where Oedipus took the brooches from: as in *OT* from his wife' and mother's dress.[18] Where else would he have found "brooches of beaten gold", that is of royal possessions, all of a sudden in this moment of despair? From her jewellery box, other ladies' garments? At the same time we are forced to understand and appreciate the huge difference between these two scenes: in Sophocles, Jocasta is dead at this point (version A); in Euripides she is alive (version B). Euripides' deliberate reference to Sophocles' brooches provides the key to understanding the gruesome truth in Jocasta's story: as in Sophocles, she was present, but here she was alive and a witness of her son and husband blinding himself with the brooches he took from her raiment. I will come back to this Euripidean passage below, since it will prove to be the only parallel for *Theb*. 1.72.

Like—probably—Euripides, Seneca also adapted both versions (A) and (B) for the stage. Since Seneca's *Phoen*. (B) breaks off just before the fighting starts, we cannot know how exactly Jocasta dies, but it is a fair guess that her suicide, if in the play, will have been similar to that in Euripides' *Phoin*. and Statius' *Theb*.11, that is either at the beginning of the battle or after the death of her sons.

In his *Oedipus* Seneca adapts version (A): Jocasta kills herself shortly after the anagnorisis (1024–39). The timing is the same as in *OT* 1237ff., but the order of events in Sophocles (Jocasta's suicide/ Oedipus' blinding) is reversed. This slight variation, however, allows for an original and spectacular scene. In *Oed*. 915–79 we listen to the

[18] So I agree with Zieliński's claim (1925, 32) that the fibulae reflect the version in *OT*, but I cannot accept that Euripides here carelessly combined inconsistent sources. I owe this reference to Mastronarde, whose objection to Zieliński is on different grounds.

account of Oedipus' blinding himself, with his own fingers, as told by the messenger who had witnessed the terrible scene. At the end of his eyewitness account (978–9), the bold metaphor of the 'shower', not of tears as in *profusus imber et rigat fletu genas* (953), but now of blood, deliberately recalls the 'shower of blood' in the messenger's report in *OT* 1278–9:[19]

> rigat ora foedus imber et lacerum caput
> largum reuulsis sanguinem uenis uomit.
>
> (*Oed.* 978–9)

> A hideous shower wetted his face, and his mutilated head spewed copious blood from his torn veins (tr. Fitch 2004; adapted)

> ἀλλ' ὁμοῦ μέλας
> ὄμβρος χαλάζης αἵματός τ' ἐτέγγετο.
>
> (*OT* 1278–9)

> but all at once a dark shower of blood came down like hail. (tr. Lloyd-Jones).

Seneca's reference here firmly establishes his blinding-scene in the tradition of Sophocles' *OT*, but not for long. After the short chorus (980–97), not only Oedipus enters in his terrible state, as he does in *OT*, but also Jocasta (1003ff.), who is still alive. Here it becomes apparent that Seneca has reversed Sophocles' order of suicide and blinding. For the first time in the history of the *Oedipodeia*, we listen to the tragic couple briefly discussing matters of guilt and fate, after which Jocasta decides to kill herself. This confrontation between mother and bloodstained blind son is an effective, frightening and highly original scene, but nothing compared to the breathtaking sequel: Jocasta's suicide, here for the first time on stage. Jocasta first urges her son to kill her (1032–4), then she abruptly incites herself to grab her son's sword (1034 *rapiatur*):

> Agedum, commoda matri manum,
> si parricida es: restat hoc operi ultimum.
> rapiatur ensis; hoc iacet ferro meus
> coniunx—quid illum nomine haud uero uocas?
> socer est.
>
> (*Oed.* 1032–6)

[19] So Töchterle 1994 *ad loc.*, who refers to Braun 1867. For more numerical correspondences, see Statius' reworking of Verg. *A.* 4.641ff. in *Theb.* 11.635ff. (below) and my (1994) xxxi, note 16.

> [*To Oedipus*] Come now, lend your hand's service to your mother, if you are a parricide: this task remains to complete your work. [*To herself*] Let me seize his sword. It was this blade that killed my husband. Why call him by an untruthful name? He was my father-in-law. (tr. Fitch 2004)

Here Jocasta says that the sword Oedipus is carrying (cf. 935ff.) is the same with which he killed Laius (1034f.). Like the whole scene, this element too is a Senecan innovation. In *Phoin.* 1456 Euripides is the first to have Jocasta kill herself with a sword instead of by hanging herself: the sword she took from one of her sons she had found dead on the battlefield, the same sword with which the son had killed his brother (*Phoin.* 1456, above). Seneca here further develops the "Symbolik der identischen Mordwaffe" (Töchterle at 1034f.): Jocasta in *Phoen.* kills herself with the sword with which Oedipus had killed his father/ her first husband.

Of all the variations applied to the incestuous relations within this family, Jocasta's 'correctio' *socer* is easily the most cynical. With sword in hand (*hoc ferro*) she then considers where to strike her body, either her breast (as in *Theb.* 11.639, below) or her throat (as in *Phoin.* 1457); she decides, finally, on her womb:

> utrumne pectori infigam meo
> telum an patenti conditum iugulo inprimam?
> eligere nescis uulnus: hunc, dextra, hunc pete
> uterum capacem, qui uirum et gnatos tulit.
>
> (*Oed.* 1036–9)

> Shall I fasten the weapon in my breast, or drive it deep into my bare throat? You have no skill in choosing a wound! Strike this, my hand, this capacious womb, which bore husband and children (tr. Fitch 2004)

Jocasta's choice of stabbing her womb to kill herself is original within the tradition of her suicide, but similar to Agrippina's *uentrem feri* when addressing her murderer in Tac. *Ann.* 14.8.5. Would this be a "zufällige Koinzidenz" (Zwierlein 1987) or does Seneca deliberately have Jocasta echo Agrippina's famous last words? If the latter is the case, we would have a *terminus post quem* for the *Oedipus* and an interesting political dimension in this play.[20] The play ends with blind Oedipus accusing himself of being *bis parricida* and groping his way out into darkness and voluntary exile—as he wishes to do in *OT*:

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[20] See Töchterle 1994, 630f.

> pauitante gressu sequere fallentes uias;
> suspensa plantis efferens uestigia
> caecam tremente dextera noctem rege.
> ingredere praeceps, lubricos ponens gradus,
> i profuge uade—siste, ne in matrem incidas.
>
> (*Oed.* 1047–51)

> [To himself] With shaking step follow deceptive paths. As you drag yourself away with each hesitant footfall, guide your blind night with trembling hands. No, advance headlong, your steps slipping, go, flee into exile—but stop, lest you fall upon your mother. (tr. Fitch 2004)

Every element of Seneca's highly original scene is meant to be frightening on stage: Oedipus blinded, his face covered in blood, Jocasta thrusting her son's sword—the same with which he had killed his father/her husband—into her womb (1039), and the son's staggering exit, almost stumbling over his mother's corpse (1051). But most dramatic of all, the mother's suicide is now 'witnessed' by her sightless son.

As stated above, Seneca took the theme of the 'identical murder weapon' from *Phoin.* and applied it here to both parents: Jocasta commits suicide with Oedipus' sword, the same with which he had killed his father. This innovation inspired Statius to go one step further. In *Thebaid* book 11, Jocasta commits suicide in her bedroom in the royal palace, at the very beginning of the fatal duel, by throwing herself into the sword that once belonged to Laius:

> Olim autem inceptae clamore exterrita pugnae
> regina extulerat notum penetralibus ensem,
> ensem sceptriferi spolium lacrimabile Lai.
>
> (*Theb.* 11.634–6)

> Some time earlier the queen, alarmed by the noise of combat begun, had brought out from a hidden place the well-known sword, the sword, lamentable spoil of sceptred Laius. (tr. SB)

The phrase *notum ensem* (11.635) refers to Sen. *Phoen.* 106f. where Oedipus specifies the sword he asked Antigone to hand over to him as: *sed notum nece/ ensem paterna*. Jocasta in Seneca's *Oed.* also knows the history of this sword, as appears from *hoc iacet ferro meus coniunx* (1034, above). In Statius, *notum* (635, above) is given yet a further explanation: as we learn from *spolium Lai* (636), the sword originally belonged to Laius, was seized by Oedipus during the fight on the crossroads and then used by him to kill his father. In itself it is

possible that Oedipus only seized the sword from his father yet killed him with his staff, as in *OT* 811, but his own description of the killing as *secui ora senis* in *Theb.* 1.65f. favours the interpretation of Laius' sword as the weapon with which he was killed. So it is the sword of Laius and the same with which he had been killed by his son that Jocasta deliberately brings out from "a hidden place" (*penetralibus*) in the palace. As in Seneca, the same sword will kill both parents, but in Statius it had, moreover, originally belonged to Laius himself.

Every detail in Statius' subsequent description of Jocasta's suicide aims at maximum pathos: her physical weakness as it appears from her failed attempt to plunge the sword into her breast (*luctata dextra*), the need for a second and different attempt (*prono pectore*), her aged veins (*aniles*), her (few drops of) blood "purging" the "hapless couch", and, finally, the wound in her skinny (*exili*) bosom:

> multaque cum superis et diro questa cubili
> et nati furiis et primi coniugis umbris,
> luctata est dextra, et prono uix pectore ferrum
> intrauit tandem: uenas perrumpit aniles
> uulnus et infelix lustratur sanguine lectus.
> illius exili stridentem in pectore plagam
> Ismene conlapsa super lacrimisque comisque
> siccabat plangens:
>
> (*Theb.* 11.637–44)

> Long complaint she made of the High Ones and the accursed bed and her son's madness and her first husband's shade; then she struggled with her right hand, and with breast leaning forward finally managed to enter the steel. The wound breaks her aged veins and the hapless couch is purged with blood. Ismene collapsed upon the blow that squeaked in her meagre bosom and dried it with tears and hair as she lamented. (tr. SB)

Her—reported—lament in 637–8 on the divine will and her incestuous marriage recalls the same scene in *OT* 1245–50, where she cries out for Laius and likewise bewails her life and marriage in retrospect:

> κάλει τὸν ἤδη Λάϊον πάλαι νεκρόν,
> μνήμην παλαιῶν σπερμάτων ἔχουσ', ὑφ' ὧν
> θάνοι μὲν αὐτός, τὴν δὲ τίκτουσαν λίποι
> τοῖς οἷσιν αὐτοῦ δύστεκνον παιδουργίαν·
> γοᾶτο δ' εὐνάς, ἔνθα δύστηνος διπλοῦς
> ἐξ ἀνδρὸς ἄνδρα καὶ τέκν' ἐκ τέκνων τέκοι.
>
> (*OT* 1245–50)

> calling on Laius, now long a corpse, remembering their love-making long ago, which had brought him death, leaving her to bring forth a progeny accursed by one that was his own; and she wept over the bed where in double misery she had brought forth a husband by her husband and children by her child. (tr. Lloyd-Jones)

The pathos in Statius is further charged by verbal references to Dido's death, closely associating Jocasta's suicide with that of the tragic queen *par excellence*, who chooses to kill herself with Aeneas' sword:

Theb. 11	*A.* 4
635 *penetralibus*	645 *interiora domus … limina*
635 *extulerat notum ensem*	646 *ensemque recludit* and 648 *notumque cubile*
640 *uenas … aniles*	641 *studio … anili* (of Barce)
642 *stridentem in pectore plagam*	689 *stridit sub pectore uulnus,*
643 *Ismene collapsa*	664 *conlapsam*
643f. *lacrimisque comisque/ siccabat*	687 *siccabat ueste cruores* and 649 *lacrimis*

Jocasta's bitter thoughts of her life in two lines (637–8) summarize her thoughts in *OT* 1245–50 and are a counterpart to Dido's extensive soliloquy in *A.* 4.651–62. This economy of words is typical of Statius' style, as is the cruel substitution of *in pectore* for Virgil's *sub pectore* and the daring concetto *plagam lacrimis siccabat* (imitating *A.* 10.834) replacing *siccabat ueste cruores*.[21]

oculos in matre reliqui (Theb. 1.72)

After this analysis of the tradition of Jocasta's death and of the variations in the circumstances, setting and timing of this dramatic episode by Euripides, Seneca and Statius, I will now return to the problem of alleged inconsistency in *Theb.* 1.72 mentioned above:

> miseraque oculos in matre reliqui

[21] Statius' transformation of the suicide of the young and beautiful queen Dido into that of the aged queen Jocasta may have influenced Tacitus' similar description of Seneca's suicide in *Ann.* 15.63: *quoniam* senile (*aniles*, 11.640) *corpus et parco uictu tenuatum lenta effugia sanguini praebebat …* uenas abrumpit (*uenas perrumpit aniles/ uulnus*, 11.640).

With these words, as we have seen above, Oedipus reminds the Fury of how he blinded himself and "left my eyes upon my hapless mother". As stated above, SB in his footnote explains *in matre* as referring to her dead body, like all scholars did before him.[22] Following this interpretation, Jocasta is dead in 1.72, very much alive during her attempt at mediation in the Argive camp in 7.470ff., and finally dies—again—in 11.634. If this were indeed the case, we would have to assume that Statius did not at all care about the order of events of his story, or that he changed it deliberately for some reason we do not understand, or that he had forgotten his own precise chronology in book 1 by the time he had arrived at book 7. Some scholars eager to evade these unpleasant assumptions changed the transmitted text: *mente* (Bentley); *in morte* (Peyraredus), which is accepted by Caviglia (1973, *ad loc.*): "a miserabile morte abbandonai i miei occhi" (referring to *Phoin.* 60f. ἐς ὄμμαθ' αὑτοῦ δεινὸν ἐμβάλλει φόνον); *miserosque* (Garrod). Damsté (1908, 354) takes *matre* as 'humi', which would ascribe to Statius a most unfortunate ambiguity. Heuvel (1932, *ad loc.*) interprets *in matre* as 'supra matrem', with reference to *OT* 1265ff.

As an alternative, I suggest that Jocasta is alive at this point and will die only in 11.634–47. If this interpretation holds true, Statius in 1.72 has selected and combined elements from every version of his predecessors into an original dramatic setting, to be reconstructed only from this phrase—*miseraque oculos in matre reliqui*—and the earlier traditions it recalls:

– from Soph. *OT* (A) Statius took the motif of Jocasta lying down (*in matre reliqui*); in *OT* she lies dead on the ground (ἐπεὶ δὲ γῇ/ ἔκειτο τλήμων, 1266f.), here probably on her bed;

– from Eur. *Phoin.* 59–62 (B) he took Oedipus blinding himself (but not the pins) while Jocasta was still alive;

– from Eur. *Phoin.* (B) and Sen. *Phoen.* (B) he took Jocasta's attempt at mediation, thus postponing her suicide until—in *Thebaid* book 7—the outbreak of war;

[22] Also Hill 1996a in his *app. crit.*: "recte explicat Barth: 'quia suspensam eam inveniens dirupit restim, seque cadaveri iniectum exoculavit'". I cannot find this quotation in my edition of Barth (1664). I cannot find Caviglia's reference to Lactantius' explanation 'proieci ante matrem' either, which according to Garrod is from *schol. Cod. Magd.*

– from Sen. *Oed.* (A) he took the method, the destroying fingers replacing the pins in *OT* 1268 and *Phoin.* 62.

According to this interpretation, in Statius' 1.72 the highly dramatic scene would run as follows: after Oedipus has discovered the truth, he blinds himself; this act is witnessed by Jocasta, who is probably lying—alive—on their bed. As a variation on the pins in *OT* (1268f.) and *Phoin.* (62), Oedipus in *Theb.* 1.71 destroys his eyes by pushing them out of their sockets: *digitis cedentibus/ ultro incubui*, imitating Sen. *Oed.* 962 *oculi suam intenti manum ultro insecuntur … scrutatus manibus uncis* (cf. *Theb.* 1.82f. *cruentis unguibus*). After this deed, he throws his eyeballs upon his miserable mother and leaves them there (*misera … in matre reliqui*).

Such an (implied) scene would suit Statius' style very well. Not only does he manage to recall all his models (in five words only), but he also creates an original setting, improving on the drama in *OT* where Jocasta, being dead, fails to witness the blinding of her son, and on Sen. *Oed.* where the mother's suicide on stage is 'witnessed' by her *sightless* son. Here, the blinding is witnessed by Jocasta, who is very much alive, and the implied dramatic effect of Oedipus throwing his eyes on her body is unparallelled, unless we accept—as I have argued we should—that Oedipus in *Phoin.* 62 took the pins from Jocasta's garment, as he did in *OT.* If that is the case, also in *Phoin.* 62 Jocasta, who reports what had happened, has been an eyewitness of her son's act of blinding.

In my opinion, *in matre* should be taken literally, but I feel reluctant to accept that Jupiter's picture of the outrageous behaviour of Oedipus' sons in *cadentes/ calcauere oculos* (1.238f.) is likewise realistic. Jupiter here rather phrases the sons' violent and abusive behaviour towards their blinded father as an imagined terrible deed to prove his point, perhaps inspired by Oedipus' metaphorical *insultant tenebris* (*Theb.* 1.78). This aggressive metaphor will be echoed by Jocasta's challenge to her son to first kill her before going off to fight his brother:

> haec tibi canities, haec sunt calcanda, nefande,
> ubera, perque uterum sonipes hic matris agendus.
>
> (*Theb.* 11.341f.)

> These my white hairs, these breasts, wicked man, you must trample, this horse you must drive through your mother's womb. (tr. SB)

Here, Jocasta uses this appallingly cruel phrase literally, in order to keep Eteocles from going to war, whereas Jupiter thinks of a cruel picture to convince his audience that Oedipus' sons must be punished.

My interpretation of Jocasta being alive in Theb. 1.72 is confirmed by two references in books 2 and 4, that is long before her attempt at reconciliation in book 7.470ff.[23] In *Theb.* 2.438–42 Eteocles rejects Tydeus' request to him to leave Thebes and live in exile for a year in turn. One of his arguments is that Argia, Polynices' Argive bride, would never get used to a life in the Theban palace:

> anne feret luxu consueta paterno
> hunc regina larem? nostrae cui iure sorores
> anxia pensa trahant, **longo quam sordida luctu**
> **mater** et ex imis auditus forte tenebris
> offendat sacer ille senex.
>
> (*Theb.* 2.438–442)

> Will the queen accustomed to her father's luxury endure a home like this?—where our sisters would in duty spin anxious threads for her, where our mother, unkempt in long mourning, and that accursed ancient, heard perhaps from lowest darkness, would offend her? (tr. SB)

The queen is said to be "unkempt in long mourning" and therefore certainly alive. By the time we have reached this passage, we are forced to reconsider our possible earlier assumption that Statius in *Theb.* 1.72 followed Sophocles' *OT* and *OC* (version A), and have to decide in retrospect that Statius actually followed version (B) all the time. This interpretation is then confirmed in *Theb.* 4.88–9, where Polynices, still in exile, is said to yearn for his kingdom, mother and sisters:

> iam regnum matrisque sinus fidasque sorores
> spe uotis tenet.[24]
>
> (*Theb.* 4.88–9)

> Already in hope and prayer he possesses his realm and his mother's bosom and his faithful sisters. (tr. SB)

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[23] I gratefully owe these references to my student Pieter van de Broek.

[24] I agree with Micozzi 2007 *ad loc.* that the interpretation by D. Hershkowitz (1998a, 278) of these lines is rather strained: "Polynices' desire to return to his hereditary kingdom is linked with his desire to regain the sinus matris, displaying his equally hereditary sexual yearning for a return to the womb." A son's longing for his mother's embrace (*sinus*) should be distinguished from yearning for her womb.

In his discussion of *Phoin*. 62, Mastronarde rejects the possibility that here, where Jocasta is alive, Euripides would deliberately allude to Sophocles' pins (*OT* 1268f.). He points out that Euripides' assumed use of Sophocles' fibulae (from Jocasta's dead body) has been criticised as a careless combination of inconsistent elements (Zieliński 1925), and that Fraenkel (1963) for the same reason considers the verse an interpolation, since he cannot believe that Euripides is responsible for such inconsistency. To my mind, it is no coincidence that Statius' line 1.72 has been criticised on precisely the same grounds, since *Phoin*. 62 is Statius' point of departure for his combination of versions (A) and (B). Both poets, however, are far too sophisticated to be criticised for inconsistency. They rather invite us to recognise their allusions and interpret the differences from the original text thus referred to. As in this case, Euripides' style is often remarkably close to Seneca's, and this 'modern' character may explain the popularity of his plays in Neronian and Flavian poetry.[25]

[25] See Bremer 1983. For Statius being inspired by Euripides' *Phoinissai* see also my commentary (1994) on *Theb.* 7.470–563.

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